

# LABOR MAGAZINE



THE VOICE OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR

## Fighting Miners!

WEST VIRGINIA AND WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

C. P. L. A. and Unions

SOCIALIST PARTY---*Working-  
Class or Middle-Class?*

Kautsky at the Crossroads  
---The Strange Case of "Comrade" Hillquit

JULY, 1931

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## LABOR AGE

Vol. XX—No. 7

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## IN THIS ISSUE

**R**EVOLT spreads through the miners' country. West Virginia looks to a general strike in the Kanawha Valley on July 6. West Pennsylvania and eastern Ohio have already shown spirit. Desperation has had something to do with the rebellion in Coal. Desperation drove the miners around Pittsburgh to the National Miners Union, and has already caused the men of Kentucky to pick up their guns. A special story on Kentucky appears in our next issue, following the previous stirring account of Tess Huff. But in these present pages we learn of the continued organization drive in the West Virginia hills and what it means. Katherine H. Pollak has been on the ground for months, helping in the drive and in the relief work. Her account comes right out of the valley where the fight is the thickest.

**N**O one has been in a better position to observe what is going forward in western Pennsylvania than A. G. McDowell. The stodgy figures of United Mine Workers leaders and the picturesque National Mine Workers men pass in the picture. It is a real battle that is going on around Pittsburgh, of much significance in future labor struggles. The entire story of the step-by-step tactics will be given later in our pages. What McDowell, Socialist and Federated Press correspondent, tells us is of stirring interest, as a page out of the current class struggle.

**W**HAT is the attitude of the C.P.L.A. toward these struggles and toward the existing unions? An answer to that question was promised in the last number. And here it is, from the pen of A. J. Muste. It is something of a summary of his statement on the C.P.L.A. in the debate with Foster. It is particularly worth while just

now, when there is so much discussion of the C.P.L.A. in the Communist press—of all shades of opinion.

**F**ROM miners' correspondents come reports of what is happening in Illinois and elsewhere, to advance the program of the Policy Committee formed at the St. Louis rank and file convention. There is much astir, you will agree, toward a new workers expression in Coal. While John L. Lewis cries out to his bosom friend, helpless Herbert, the miners decide that Lewisism must disappear. But . . . we leave the encouraging news for you to read.

**T**HE Socialist Party is a fit subject for discussion. "The Strange Case of 'Comrade' Hillquit", leading editorial, alludes to a dissatisfying phase in the Socialist Party. Is this difficulty of the S.P. a fundamental one? J. C. Kennedy seemed to think that it was in his review of Norman Thomas' book in our last issue. Leonard Bright takes issue with Kennedy . . . in part. He thinks that Thomas will not lead the party into the camp of Liberalism. But he agrees that all is not well in various S.P. tendencies.

**T**HEN, there is the pocketbook workers situation. An active worker correspondent from the ranks of the pocketbook workers union gives us a picture of what took place during the recent strike and its conclusion. Weakness and vacillation distinguished the leadership in this fight. The surrender to arbitration on the reorganization point has aroused the wrath of many of the rank and file members. It was a fundamental mistake, the article emphasizes.

**J**ERGER'S cartoon in our March issue has been reprinted far and wide. He adds another sarcastically tragic gibe at the nonsensical system which gives us too much wheat and lets children starve from lack of bread. "Use surplus wheat to hide the graves of the little ones who have died because they had no wheat!"

**H**ENRY LEE MOON, a former Brookwooder, brings out vividly the issues in the Scottsboro frame-up. This supplementary comment, however, may not be out of order:

Without seeking to detract from this otherwise splendid article of Brother Moon, but in the interest of the broadest and most effective development of the campaign in behalf of the Scottsboro Nine, we are compelled to add certain comments not noted in the article. It is our opinion that the I.L.D., while it has effectively brought the case prominently before the public eye, has failed to rally the broadest possible support for the Scottsboro victims. The policy of seeking to make the case a purely Communist campaign of vilification of all non-Communist elements, and rushing to capitalize the campaign for the immediate benefits of the Communist Party, has resulted in narrowing the base of support for this very important case. It is our hope that these shortcomings will be rectified as speedily as possible in order to increase the effectiveness of this campaign, and in order to secure the speediest possible release of the Scottsboro Nine.

**O**UR other features continue, including in particular the "Flashes from the Labor World" with which we are favored every month. There's something stirring in the world of the workers, those pages disclose!

# · LABOR · AGE ·

July, 1931

## EDITORIALS

**E. A. FILENE**, the department store magnate, prophesies that unemployment insurance is inevitable, in the June *American Labor Legislation Review*. That is undoubtedly

### **The Conspiracy of Silence on Unemployment**

true, from the viewpoint of enlightened Business. We can confidently say that "Eventually they

can't escape the dole!"

We have never had illusions about unemployment insurance. It is not in the slightest degree a remedy for the out-of-work evil. The end of the Profit System alone will see the end of unemployment. But it is a measure of justice, particularly under the Profit System itself with its inevitable depressions, which cannot be successfully challenged as a human necessity. The bland, reactionary attitude of the A. F. of L. officialdom on this subject is an indictment of the A. F. of L.; that is all. It goes naturally hand-in-hand with non-partisanship, racketeering and general stupidity.

It is clear, also that the institution of the unemployment insurance machinery will take time. There must be a supplement, then to relieve the workers immediately—and that is through direct governmental relief. Starvation creeps over a larger and larger group of our people. And again we warn that Winter of 1931, to put it frankly, will be hell.

The Great White Elephant in the White House says nothing and does nothing on this evil. In this non-action he is backed by a tremendous conspiracy of silence on the part of the press. Unemployment and the apple vendors have gone off the front page. The lazy sun of Summer makes poverty pinch less. There is no coal to buy; less food is needed to keep life flowing to no more desperate act, save perhaps suicide. And suicide in the minds of the masters of the present machine means only one less to a temporarily surplus population.

The critical item in this conspiracy is that there is no preparation for the suffering of the winter. Extra sessions of the legislatures and of Congress were imperative. They have not been called.

Nor will action be taken for the industrial workers until they begin to show organized revolt. It is our hope that they will go a few steps toward imitating the direct action of the farmers of Arkansas. Congress understood a riot, and capitulated in part when the episode at England took place. Hoover has anticipated this sort of revolt, and the iron hand will meet any city rioting, particularly around the homes of the rich. But the workers will eventually be driven in desperation to say: "To Hell with Hoover!" and will act upon that slogan.

The long suffering of the American workers is great. They still believe in the phantom of "democracy." They

still believe that "Prosperity is around the corner." It is on those superstitions that the press and the Powers That Be rely in their superb silence of the present hour. It will take a few more winters to organize discontent effectively. But the coming winter should see the beginning—and in this period of suffering lies fertile work ahead for radicals.

▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼

**TRIBUTE** comes to the Soviet Union from unexpected sources. "Plans" for the preservation of Capitalism are being ground out in every study where publicity is con-

### **Planless Plans— Hoover, Woll, Et Al**

sideration No. 1. The imagination of the world—suffering from unemployment and unrest—has been caught by those magic words "The Five-Year Plan". Suddenly we all wake up, to find "efficient" Capitalism planless and chaotic.

Bitter enemies of the Soviet Republic compliment it by rushing into print with "plans". At Indianapolis none other than the Great Engineer, after having Valley-Forged it, comes forth with his "plan". Says he:

"We plan to build for them (the American people) 4,000,000 new and better homes, thousands of new and still more beautiful buildings, thousands of factories; to increase the capacity of our railroads; to add thousands of miles of highways and waterways; to install 25,000,000 electric horsepower, to grow 20 per cent more farm products. We plan to provide new parks, colleges, schools and churches for these 20,000,000 people. We plan more leisure for men and women and better opportunities for its enjoyment."

How 20,000,000 additional people are to be generated by Herbert silence only gives answer. How the new homes are to be built, we know not. The weeping Valley Forger understands full well that "new and better homes" mean little, even if they can be erected, so long as they are the renters or mortgagors source of embarrassment and worry which they are today. Home ownership has fallen in the good old U. S. A.

Herbert's thousands of factories do not much catch our fancy, since the factories we have are shut down or almost so. His new electric power and all that stuff can forecast added misery in a land where we already "produce too much". His 20 per cent added farm products, were they to come true, would be a positive nightmare. The farmer can't get rid of what he produces now.

The leisure that Herbert talks about is with us at the present—an involuntary leisure which the Great Engineer has done nothing to relieve.

The Master Planner of the White House has brought forth a little mouse out of all his travail at Valley Forge.



The effort to make him "human" seems to have gone too far, and now he is indulging in fairy tales.

Comes also Matthew Woll—Third Vice President of the A. F. of L., Acting President of the National Civic Federation, beer-booster extraordinary, life insurance magnate, head of the A. F. of L. labor press, leading spirit in A. F. of L. "workers education," etc., etc. Matthew likewise has a "plan". It is based on high tariffs, necessarily. Hoover promises his Land of Milk and Honey in 20 years. But Matthew cuts the time in half. His "plan" is for ten years.

Matthew wants to get a planned society through a National Industrial Conference of business and labor—something like what the Fascists set up in Italy as Step No. 1. He is strong on saving business, though of course he throws in the phrases about a 30-hour week and good wages. The Fascists did something like that also.

Woll is very vague as to how his 10-year plan is to function. Why worry about little things like that? He is definite on one thing only: "The 5-year plan in Russia, according to the evidence of recognized economic authorities, is proving a hopeless failure." Herbert agrees, at Indianapolis. And yet, this "hopeless failure" is so hopeless that it compels these defenders of Capitalism to rush in with poor little imitations of the real thing.

The "plans" of Hoover, Woll, et al are paper plans. The 5-Year Plan in Russia is built up in things tangible. Hoover and Woll cannot escape the heavy burden of profit, interest and rent. The abolition of these incubi on the human race is the soul of the Soviet Union's idea. It is that soul which is driving ahead in concrete and steel. It is that soul which Hoover's and Woll's magic pronouncements lack.

There is this sinister thing about the business. Woll has appealed to Business against the Soviet Union. He has joined hands in his letter with James Gerard, who is forming a Joint Conference on Unfair Russian Competition to fight the Soviets. What Matt is trying to do is quite clear. He is seeking a war against the U.S.S.R. in the name of a planless plan.

DEPRESSION has brought out in more ways than one the ugly features of the Capitalist Racket. Not the least of these by-products coming to the surface, under stress of the crisis, have been the

### Abuses in Unions Come to Surface

abuses current in many labor unions.

Committee after committee has come to the C.P.L.A. with accounts of unfair favoritism on the part of business agents, discrimination against union workers who do not go with the "machine", and widespread conspiracies in some instances to deprive protesting union members of their chances of livelihood.

While an unofficial committee has been called into the Amalgamated Clothing Workers situation by complaints of unemployed rank and file members, the general officers of that organization and the clothing manufacturers have felt called upon to appeal to Mayor Walker about the underworld influence in their New York organization. What good effects will come of appeal to the "public authorities" remains to be seen. It is very unlikely that anything will be done along these lines toward removing the underlying evil.

With the continuance of the depression, the plight of the membership in underworld-controlled unions will compel them to take action toward a cleansing. In this industry and that, the racketeer has grown fat over the misuse

of the labor struggle. It is important that the membership in racketeer-dominated unions unite to get rid of the parasitic outside elements which have injured the workers' cause.



WHILE members of the National Miners' Union are shot down in cold blood by the coal and iron police, Gov. Pinchot points with pride to the anti-injunction bill which has just become a law in Pennsylvania.

### Smash Injunctions By Defiance

This law is one of the most "advanced" that have been adopted by any State. That it should be placed upon the statute books of Joe Grundy's "commonwealth" is cause for much comment. Trial by jury in injunction cases is provided. The employer who seeks "relief" by this route must come into the court "with clean hands." The "yellow dog contract" cannot be the basis for a court ukase against labor. So the law reads in part.

Think not, gentle reader, that a miracle has occurred in Penn's Woods. The millenium has not arrived, nor will the persecutions of workers cease by reason of this legislative act. There is only one answer to the injunction in labor disputes, and that is its complete abolition.

Complete abolition cannot be secured "constitutionally", however, by reason of the decision of the Sacred Cow in Washington in the celebrated Arizona case. The American Civil Liberties Union and the labor organizations of Pennsylvania have then done the next best thing in getting this present law adopted. It will at least save a few militant strike leaders from going to jail.

The path ahead for the workers still remains defiance of these Czaristic edicts. The power of the courts in this country must be smashed to bits. Their record is one long assault upon the liberties of the working people. Put an "honest man" on the bench and he becomes almost invariably a cheap prostitute for every powerful influence. We will make no headway if the workers get lost in legalisms and kow-tow an iota to these shock troops of Capitalism, the courts. The worker has begun the first step in his own emancipation when he feels and expresses contempt for these high and mighty windbags.

Defiance had some part in the passage of the Pennsylvania law, at that. The actual act itself arose from no great wave of liberalism in Pennsylvania. Rather it came from a practical political split between the forces of Vare and Grundy in the legislature. But a portion of the drive back of it arose out of the defiance of the injunction at Nazareth by the editor of LABOR AGE, coupled with the experiences of the Hosiery Workers with these edicts in Philadelphia.

It is refreshing to see that the National Miners' Union is defying injunctions in Western Pennsylvania, even though this piece of paper has been added to the state statutes. Whether these defiances are being carried through in the most resultful manner we do not know. But this can be said, emphatically and definitely, that the injunction must be abolished in toto and that the sole way to bring that about is by a campaign of violations all over the country.

Do we not remember Carlyle's inference that the French Revolution became a fact when the sansculotts looked upon the King, as upon any other man, "and did not die"? When the workers in America forget the prevailing religion of "Law and Order," and hurl back defiance into the teeth of the judiciary, then and then only, will we be prepared for a real forward step.

# The Strange Case of "Comrade" Hillquit

MORRIS HILLQUIT, noted lawyer, is the intellectual leader of the Socialist Party of America. By virtue of his great ability and of his positions as National Chairman of the Party and International Secretary, he is likewise the most prominent personality in the ranks of that group. What he says and what he does give no inconsiderable indication of the part played by the Socialist Party in the international scene and in the struggle of the workers.

It is of striking significance, therefore, that Morris Hillquit appears as lawyer for interests seeking to secure legal nullification of the "confiscatory" acts of the Soviet Union. In the *New York Times* of June 21 an item appeared stating that Hillquit was the legal representative of 16 oil companies and two individuals in a suit, nominally, against the Vacuum Oil Co. The suit involves \$105,000,000 in oil properties, and these companies had received the concessions thereto from the Czarist government. Their contention is that the Soviet Union had no legal right to expropriate these oil properties, and then sell the oil produced by the Soviets to the Vacuum Oil Co.

The consciences of many good Socialists were disturbed by this peculiar act of their leader. There was much talk, and it was even hinted darkly that charges might be preferred against him for acts unbecoming a member of the Socialist Party. Such charges have not been made up to date. On the other hand, a defense by Hillquit of his act appears in the *New Leader* of June 28. In brief his contention is that the suit will serve as a means of pressure to bring about recognition of the Soviet Union. We quote the exact words used:

"It might be argued that the present actions will serve as a stimulus to the powerful oil interests of America to urge Soviet recognition, but that would smack of hypocrisy and I prefer to rest on the simple ground that the actions are of no political significance."

It is interesting that Hillquit, in his shrewd way, does trot out by indirection the contention which he says would be hypocrisy. But he goes even further and solemnly affirms that the question of the Soviet Union's expropriation of oil lands was not involved in the case. His precise words are:

"The right of a government to nationalize industries with or without compensation, is not questioned in the complaints. The Supreme Court of the United States and our State court have invariably upheld the right of foreign governments to confiscate property of their nationals."

But reference to the complaint and summons filed by Hillquit in the case directly challenge the truthfulness of his explanation, and of the introductory statement of the *New Leader* in publishing it. Sections XXVI of the complaint reads—and we ask our readers to note particularly the words we have marked in bold type:

"In and after November, 1917, a revolution occurred in Russia and the supporters of the said revolution, acting together

under the name or designation of the Federated Socialist Soviet Republics of Russia or Soviet Government of Russia, thereafter **wrongfully, unlawfully and by force of arms** seized possession of all the plaintiffs' oil lands, wells, buildings, fixtures, machinery, plants, cisterns and pipe lines above described by virtue of an alleged decree of nationalization or confiscation of all oil lands and of the whole oil producing business in Russia and have ever thereafter **wrongfully and forcibly** retained and maintained possession of the said lands, wells, buildings, fixtures, machinery, plants, cisterns and pipe lines without the consent of the owners thereof and of the persons lawfully entitled to the possession of the same, including the plaintiffs. The said revolutionists and those acting in their behalf will hereafter be designated herein as the Soviet Government."

In section XXIX it is stated that "the said Soviet government thereafter wrongfully, unlawfully and forcibly obliterated and destroyed" all marks of individual ownership. In section XXXI it is asserted that Hillquit's clients "were and are the owners of the said land and the oil therein," and charges the Soviet government with "wrongful possession of the same."

Hillquit boldly bases his action on the fact, as stated in section XXVII:

"The Soviet Government of Russia is not and never was recognized by the government of the United States as a government de jure or de facto."

He also points out with some audacity the growth of Soviet oil production, claiming returns to his clients out of this increased production. On this score he states:

"Since the beginning of 1925 the said Soviet government of Russia has largely increased the production of oil in the Baku region, including the lands of the plaintiffs, by drilling additional wells and by means of additional and improved plants, machinery and equipment and has extracted oil from the land of the plaintiffs in larger quantities and in at least the same relative proportions to the total production in the Baku region as it was in the period prior to the beginning of 1918."

To these and other statements he affixes his signature as attorney, stating under oath that they are correct.

It is this form of attack upon the Soviet Union which Hillquit infers will assist to bring about recognition. We submit that such circuitous reasoning goes far beyond any with which we are familiar, and that it is used now for a lame defence of a counter-revolutionary step. Beyond all the words of Hillquit there stands the stark fact that the expropriation by a workers' government of the properties granted by the Czar is challenged by him. The object his clients have in mind is to nullify such expropriations. And he, under oath, alleges that the acts of the Soviet Union are "wrong" and "unlawful."

Such a line of reasoning that he attempts to use, however, is a natural result of the attitude of a great section of the Second International. There is something appropriate in his taking this action on the eve of his departure for the Vienna Congress of that body.





Drawn for Labor Age by Jerger.

One Use for "Surplus Wheat"

# Life-or-Death Struggle

By KATHERINE H. POLLAK

## Looms in Coal Fields of W. Va.

**F**IERCE battle looms in the Kanawha coal field of southern West Virginia. The miners here, like the striking coal diggers in Ohio and Pennsylvania, are desperate, and like their mountaineer brothers in Kentucky, they can shoot. People who are caught in a trap of starvation from which all peaceful exits are blocked by company tyranny and the majesty of the government, are likely to try anything in a blind effort at escape. The wide-spread network of mountain valleys in which the coal camps lie is as difficult for the forces of "law and order" to patrol as for the union officials to supervise and govern from their central office in Charleston.

This Kanawha field, stretching for some forty miles about the state capital, is the region that has witnessed the rapid growth during the last few months of the independent West Virginia Mine Workers. There is a bare possibility that the union will win an agreement without a strike but so easy an outcome seems very unlikely since, up to the time at which I write (June 20), the Kanawha Coal Operators Association has refused to meet the union in joint conference and the locals are now voting the Executive Board power to call a strike. By the time this article appears, a walk-out will very probably be under way.

The terrible conditions against which these men are revolting have been vividly described before in the pages of *LABOR AGE*. What is perhaps of most interest now is to search out and analyze the influences that will control the actions of the combatants on this battlefield of labor, scene of so many heroic struggles in the past.

### Operators Not United

The operators—to start with their side of the conflict—are by no means a united group though they have an association left over from the years before 1924 when they made joint agreements with the old district organization of their men. Some of the operators say frankly that a union is needed to stabilize labor costs and to

### Last Minute News From West Va.

A strike throughout the district will probably be called for July 6. The local unions have voted unanimously in favor of empowering the Executive Board of the West Virginia Mine Workers to call a strike, and the union has sent a second letter to the operators requesting a joint conference, hoping to convince them that it really means business. Failing a favorable reply, the call for a walk-out will probably take place June 30. It is possible that the union will agree to sign up friendly operators, thus playing off the companies against each other.

\* \* \* \*

Three hundred and fifty miners struck this morning at Edwight in protest against the firing of 26 union members, some of whom had already been evicted. The company involved, Old Ben, owns large union mines in Illinois. The victimized men reported that they had been told that if they joined the Lewis organization, they could go back to work.

The United Mine Workers has utterly failed in its recent efforts to gain a foot-hold here. The miners are not attracted by an organization that has treated them so badly in the past and that now is hog-tying its members in northern W. Va., by having the district officials, themselves appointed by Lewis, appoint the mine committees and receive the entire check-off from the company.

News comes to the union that miners in the surrounding non-union fields will also respond to the strike call. These miners cannot go a week without relief for they have no savings, no credit and few farms. The unions attitude towards spreading the strike will be governed by the energy with which its friends throughout the country rally to its aid.

stop the suicidal competition which in recent years has dragged down the selling price of coal to ruinously low figures. This realization of the need for stability may bring the union many friends in the councils of the operators. On the other hand, some of the interests represented here are notoriously anti-union, such as Paisley and the Mellon-controlled Koppers Co. Even these anti-union forces did, however, deal with these men when they had a union before.

This is the strategic time for the union to make its power felt. The lake trade, for which over half the coal in this Kanawha field is produced, reaches its height in the summer months. The operators are eager to make the most of the opportunities for sales that are offered this bad year and will therefore be more susceptible to the argument of idle mines. The depression does not work wholly against the union.

Some of the mines are small, independent ones that are most likely to feel the force of such pressure. The big powerful companies can hold out a long time if they think resistance to the organization of their men is worth the cost. The extent to which companies with wide geographical resources can fill their orders from other mines is uncertain since qualities of coal and trade routes create separate markets and the strikes in other fields are offsetting in some measure the handicap of a union which can shut down the mines of one district only. Perhaps the persistence and mass action in these other fields will serve as a reminder to the Kanawha operators of the hard-fought battles that their men have waged in the past on Paint Creek and Cabin Creek, not to mention the Armed March of 1921



when over ten thousand miners in battle formation started for Logan County and struck terror into the hearts of Charleston citizens until federal troops forced surrender.

### The Union's Strength

The union side of the picture is likewise complex. The West Virginia Mine Workers has a practically undisputed hold on the men, having extended its strength rapidly since on March 19th it arose from the ashes of the Reorganized U. M. W. of A. under which this union revival in West Virginia had begun. That reorganized union, as *LABOR AGE* readers will remember, came to a premature end at the beginning of March when the Illinois district officially returned to the Lewis fold and the old United Mine Workers. The death of the reorganized union meant that all funds to the West Virginia campaign were suddenly cut off and all activity would have had to cease had not Frank Keeney, leader of the revival, succeeded in enlisting the aid of Tom Tippet, Extension Director of Brookwood Labor College, in raising funds to keep the union effort going. Thus was Lewis disappointed in his hope that the rival wave of unionism would be starved to death.

Recently, however, Mr. Lewis has taken more positive steps to crush the flourishing organization in the Kanawha field. Spontaneous strikes two hundred miles across the mountains in the Morgantown-Fairmont field gave his organization a chance to step in and obtain a contract—the first contract the United Mine Workers has had in the state for seven years.

That contract provides for a rate of 30 cents a ton for hand loading, which is considerably lower than the



Mass Meeting of Miners, Eskdale, W. Va.

rate paid in the non-union Rockefeller mines of that same field, or than that common in the Kanawha Valley. The Lewis agreement likewise permits a nine hour shift for day men and, in the words of one of the operators who signed up, "clauses in prior contracts which were objectionable to mine operators and tended to make discipline and operation difficult have been omitted". The agreement likewise provides that the check-off shall be given direct by the companies to the officers of the district, so that, as in the anthracite, the locals will be at the mercy of the higher officials. The most significant aspect of the whole affair is that Lewis, after his policies had caused the death of the union here in 1924, was perfectly content to let the corpse remain in its grave, but as soon as a rival threatened, he was stimulated into activity and is now trying to persuade the operators around Charleston to sign with him rather than with the West Virginia Mine Workers.

It would be no wonder if the operators preferred such a non-aggressive and compliant union, especially since the belief is being cultivated that the West Virginia Mine Workers is a Communist organization. Such was the direct charge made a week or so ago by a former head of the state police whose speech, quoted at length on the front pages of both Charleston papers, declared that the union received its money from Russia via New York.

Lewis has paid men in the Kanawha field, but practically no other following. He has tried to stimulate a foot-hold through fine-sounding resolutions, even trying to claim credit for the recent hunger march of the Ward miners, who belong solidly to the West Virginia Mine Workers. In case of a strike, Lewis may try to step in and take charge, offering the men assurance of relief and the operators harmless terms of peace.

The Communist National Miners Union has so far made no appearance in southern West Virginia, and it is to be hoped that the unorganized regions where the Communists are now active will seem a more worthy field for their endeavors than a district where a militant union is already dominant.

### 90,000 People Involved

Even without inter-union complications, the task of managing a strike involving 90,000 people will have its difficulties, particularly over a far-flung line of isolated mining camps, scattered far up the creeks. The task will be none the easier for a new union which has had only a few months in which to establish its machinery. "Transportation men" will be brought in to break the strike and the com-



"Kitty" Pollak addressing miners' meeting

panies will of course summon in their defense the power of the police, of the courts and of the troops.

### Funds Needed

It remains to be seen to what extent an aroused public opinion will exert its force on the side of the exploited and rebelling mine workers—and, still more important, how great a stream of funds it will pour into the union's strike treasury. Already thousands of dollars have been contributed for the campaign by friendly individuals and organizations throughout the country, and it is this money that has kept the union going.

The Emergency Committee for Strikers' Relief has collected \$2,625, the Church Emergency Committee \$1,500, while the Christian Social Justice Fund of Baltimore has voted a similar amount. Local student organizations and church groups have also aided. The greatest part of the money, however, has come from individual donations. Mine workers' locals in Illinois and Pennsylvania have also aided, and some have put on assessments for an indefinite period. It is a highly significant fact, however, that the total amount received by the union to date from labor organizations other than the miners' locals—including the four traditional branches: trade union, political, educational and cooperative—has been scarcely two hundred dollars.

Now, as a strike approaches, renewed efforts are being made to expose the situation to the Nation and to muster support from all possible sources. The Emergency Committee for Strikers' Relief and the Church Emergency Committee are continuing to collect from their contributors. Branches of the Young People's Socialist League are holding tag days and a special committee under the auspices of the Conference for Progressive Labor Action is circulating subscription lists to collect nickels or dollars from workers everywhere. Thousands of individuals will receive new appeals, and letters have been sent to hundreds of trade unions.

No amount that is raised can be too great for the needs of a strike involving some ninety thousand people. The more support received, the greater the number of weeks the men can hold out. In the absence of an already established nation-wide machinery for organizing public meetings for the support of such an independent walk-out, much will depend on the extent to which progressives throughout the country will of their own initiative rally to the support of the coal dig-

## ***A Life and Death Matter*** **Stand By The Miners of West Virginia** **Help Them Build Their Union!**

"At least one-third of the 112,000 miners in West Virginia are totally unemployed and another one-third work only from one to two or three days a week. . . . People in the Kanawha fields are idle, hungry and half naked. . . . The companies are against labor unions and make the men sign 'yellow dog' contracts refusing to join unions. . . . Companies pay 28 cents for getting out a ton of coal and there is no overtime, no matter how long the work takes. . . . All the companies through the Kanawha coal field Kanawha, Boone and Fayette counties own all the land and the houses where the miners live. Shacks without heat and light rent at \$6 to \$10 monthly. . . . Not a miner gets enough wage to keep a family decently and nearly all of them have large families. . . . These miners are never out of debt to the company. . . . We want to build our own union."

*Statement of B. A. Scott, vice president of the West Virginia Miners Union before the Senate Committee on Unemployment.*

This appeal is a life and death matter for hundreds of miners and their families. The threatening strike will make necessary every cent of aid that can be given or secured.

If you are interested in the lives of these West Virginia miners, in saving them from the degradation that comes from starvation; if you are in sympathy with them in their brave struggle to secure decent conditions for themselves and their families, then we urge that you do everything possible to see that money is collected and rushed to the Labor Committee for Relief of the West Virginia Miners, Room 2004, 104 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

**Organize relief committees among your friends and neighbors. Arrange public meetings. Put on tag days.**

If you can do any of these things communicate immediately with Tom Tippet, Room 9, Old Kanawha Valley Bank Building, Charleston, W. Va.

gers' effort to establish a militant honest union once more.

Perhaps it is in the stress of such emergencies that sympathetic forces throughout the country crystallize and consolidate and grow. This concrete situation in which the exploited mine

workers of West Virginia are looking to progressives to feed them while they carry on the struggle is a new challenge to progressives—a challenge of far-reaching significance and one that requires immediate and energetic action.



# The C.P.L.A. Policy in Unions

By A. J. MUSTE

**W**HAT is the program of the Conference for Progressive Labor Action on the economic or trade union field?

1. The C.P.L.A. stands for militant unionism. We are opposed to the conception that strikes are not an essential part of trade union activity. We have steadily fought the idea of the present American Federation of Labor leadership that the way to organize unions is to go to the bosses and try to persuade them that it would be a fine thing for them if their workers were organized. We believe that a union which depends for its existence chiefly on the good will of the employer is a company union, whatever may be the sign over the front door. The only genuine and effective unionism is that which is based on the militancy, solidarity, and courage of the workers themselves.

2. The C.P.L.A. stands for inclusive unionism, the unionism which organizes the unskilled and semi-skilled as well as the skilled workers; which tolerates no discrimination as between white and colored; and which gives special attention to such groups as women workers and young workers who have been neglected by most of the existing unions.

3. The C.P.L.A. since its inception has been fighting for a unionism which is free from graft, corruption, and gangsterism. When we say this we are not unaware of the fact that the struggles in which unions are compelled to engage with reactionary employers are not tea parties. We realize also that graft and gangsterism have entered so deeply into all phases of American life under the capitalist system that it would be a miracle if these evils had been completely kept out of the labor movement. Experience has proved, however, that when corruption and gangsterism are once given a hold in the unions they speedily become a cancer destroying them altogether. A union may begin by hiring gangsters to protect its pickets from the employers' thugs. Once used, gangsters have to be used again. Presently the gangsters become permanently attached to the union staff, drain its treasury, control the unions, own election campaigns, eventually constitute themselves the ruling machine in the

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(Last month we gave a summary of that portion of Chairman Muste's debate with William Z. Foster which stated our analysis of the policies and activities of the Communist Party and its affiliated organizations on the economic or the trade union field. Herewith we are presenting the portion of Chairman Muste's debate which sets forth C.P.L.A. policies and activities on this field.)

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union, and after all fail to give adequate protection since the boss is in a position to pay at least as much for gangsters as the union. In the meantime, the courage and militancy of union members are completely sapped and they are unable to do anything for themselves in the struggles against the boss.

## Trade Union Democracy

4. The C.P.L.A. stands for trade union democracy. As we observed last month, even the Communists who have poured a great deal of contempt on every form of democracy are now bitterly crying for the restoration of trade union democracy, even in their own unions. By the maintenance of trade union democracy we mean that the rank and file must be given a real voice in the policies of the organization, must be given an honest opportunity to know about the issues which confront the union and to express their views regarding them. We mean that there must be toleration of opinion and freedom of speech in our union meetings so long as this expression deals with issues of genuine concern to the labor movement. We are, furthermore, opposed to any general expulsion policy, though we recognize that every organization must have the power to discipline members who engage in definite overt acts injurious to it. We believe, however, that the principle must be maintained that the sole qualification for membership in the union is that a man or woman be a worker in the particular trade or industry over which the union has juris-

diction, and that there shall be no discrimination on the ground of religious, political, social, and economic views or affiliations. Essentially, trade union democracy means that a certain measure of decency, of observing "the rules of the game" must be maintained in the internal controversies of the labor movement, or else the unions affected will inevitably split and fall to pieces.

5. The C.P.L.A. stands for industrial unionism. This involves the amalgamation of existing craft and trade unions into genuine industrial organizations. It means also that when progressives and militants go to the unorganized workers in the basic industries they must seek to bring them into industrial organizations. The C.P.L.A. has repeatedly stated that it will never again countenance the splitting up of newly organized workers into craft unions by the American Federation of Labor. If this is the price of admission required by the A. F. of L., we advise workers to refuse to pay it since doing so simply means the break-up of unionism anyway. No isolated craft organizations have as much chance as the proverbial snow ball in hell against the steel trust, the Ford Motor Company, the Standard Oil Company, the aluminum trust, etc., etc.

6. What is really the policy of the C.P.L.A. on the famous issue of "class collaboration," the B. and O. Plan, etc.? In approaching this problem we accept the fact that a union so long as the capitalist system exists has to compromise. The task of the union is to protect the worker's job and to gain certain immediate advantages for him while the labor movement educates him for the achievement of larger ends. The union itself, unless you take an out and out syndicalist position, is not charged with the job of abolishing capitalism and establishing a new economic order. History has demonstrated repeatedly that any union which actually functions on the job and is not a mere propaganda agency will "compromise" in dealing with the employers.

To some extent at least union management co-operation is just our old friend collective bargaining. In earlier, simpler days the union worker has

said to management, "You give me such and such wages, hours, conditions, security in my job, and in return I will give you so much of my time, energy, and skill." So he "cooperated," produced the goods, built industries, made a living. The method is not so simple and easy when applied to big mechanized industries under modern conditions, as the union management plan tries to do, but from one angle there is no fundamental difference.

Even from the most radical standpoint, it will hardly be claimed that the class struggle consists in the worker having a fist fight with the boss every morning. It is the business of the labor movement to put the capitalist system out of business, not necessarily to put particular firms or industries on the rocks while the capitalist system endures, and there is a decided difference between the two.

Furthermore, a merely negative policy of dogged opposition to the introduction of machinery and new methods has frequently been tried by the workers, but has never been very successful. In the early days of the industrial revolution, workers smashed machinery which was taking away their jobs and skills, but the machines stayed just the same. If the union is confronted with the choice of opposing efficient production, new machinery, and thus being gradually pushed out altogether, or of "compromising" and "cooperating" in order to keep its hands in, retain its members, keep some control over the processes of rationalization, what is a sane union expected to do?

### Criticism of B. & O. Plan

On the other hand, the C.P.L.A. has consistently maintained a critical attitude toward the B. and O. and similar plans and has severely criticized the way in which those plans have been advertised and actually carried out. We contend that a union is an organization of, for, and by the workers, that it must get gains for them and must constantly strengthen itself as over and against the forces that would destroy it. A union which consciously or unconsciously comes to think of itself as an agency to help the employer to get efficient production very soon will cease to be a genuine union. If the union keeps its primary purpose of protecting and advancing the interests of the workers foremost, almost any compromise may be temporarily justified; if the union has the attitude that it is a personnel agency for the

boss, even the smallest compromise is a step on the road to ruin and the betrayal of the workers.

Furthermore, there is the great danger that unions under these so-called cooperative plans will come to be interested only in the problems of one particular industry. They get the notion that this particular industry can be saved and the workers in it sheltered and protected under the present economic system. The very process of rationalization, however, tends to cut down the number of workers employed in that particular industry—in other words, to throw union men out of work. In so far as it succeeds, from a capitalist standpoint, it means piling up profit, economic surpluses for stockholders, and thus preventing the masses from getting the purchasing power which would enable them to buy the products of industry and to keep the industries running. Forces over which the particular industry has no control may in the meantime seriously affect or even ruin it. In the meantime the workers have been deprived, by a union which succumbs to these tendencies, of their militancy, of education as to what is really happening in the political and economic world, of interest in independent labor political action, and other methods by which the worker might eventually be freed from the exploitation and injustice which he suffers under the present economic order. These and other evils we have constantly exposed and fought.

7. What is the attitude of the C.P.L.A. toward the American Federation of Labor and its affiliated unions? We are, for one thing, flatly opposed to the present tendencies and officialdom of the A. F. of L. We do not regard the leaders, who are typified by Matthew Woll, for example, as misguided brothers who simply need to be convinced and persuaded to do the right thing, but as enemies who have to be fought by militants and progressives, who have to be eliminated from the control in the unions or perhaps in certain instances, forced by the rank and file of the membership to adopt and carry out policies which are genuinely in the interests of the rank and file. We believe, therefore, that under present conditions, militants and progressives have very little to gain by going directly to the leadership, save in certain exceptional instances. They must go to the rank and file, build a militant opposition based on the rank and file, and try to lead that opposition into power.

### Officialdom and Workers

It is necessary, however, to distinguish between the officialdom of the A. F. of L., and most of its affiliated unions, and the membership. The members of the A. F. of L. unions are workers. It is true a great many of them are the skilled workers, the so-called aristocrats of industry, and that partly because of their economic position and partly because of the faulty education which they have received from their leaders they have a capitalist psychology and very little interest in their less fortunate fellow workers. Nevertheless, even these aristocrats of labor are workers and tend to be increasingly subjected to the insecurity under which all workers suffer under capitalism. Furthermore, a very considerable number of members of the A. F. of L. unions are not skilled and by no means highly paid. Since the A. F. of L. unions in certain industries and trades contain, as a matter of fact, a very considerable percentage of the workers, exercise job control for or over those workers, as the case may be, since the workers are in these unions, we believe that militants have to continue to work within these organizations and that they cannot simply ignore or abandon them.

We have never been able to get it through our heads that when difficulties are encountered in the promotion of more militant and progressive policies in the conservative unions that something is accomplished if you get out of a reactionary union of 100,000 member, form a sectarian union of a thousand or even ten thousand, one hundred and one per cent pure militants, letting the reactionary union retain all the rest. Even when you are able to smash such a union but can build in its place nothing but a sectarian organization, including a tiny percentage of the former membership, we cannot get it through our heads that anything very important has been accomplished for the revolution!

This does not mean that the C.P.L.A. is opposed to building independent or so-called dual unions under any and every circumstance. We do not regard the A. F. of L. as a fetish. It is a means and not an end in itself. It was itself at one time a dual organization. Essentially this is a matter of expediency, of what can be done in any given situation. Where an A. F. of L. union is hopelessly corrupt, has little hold on the masses, exercises only a paper jurisdiction, and where a substantial percentage of the workers can be rallied to building an honest



and progressive union, independent unionism may be justified.

In particular, where the unorganized masses in the basic industries are involved, militants today cannot sit still and wait until the A. F. of L. gets ready to move. Everywhere C.P.L.A. members are engaged in the task of stimulating and assisting in organization moves among these masses. Even in these cases, when we organize workers, and it is possible for them to get into the A. F. of L. on anything like self-respecting terms, we advise them to do so. Wherever possible it is much better to have unity and solidarity than the splitting up of the workers. There are, however, certain conditions which we shall strongly advise the workers against accepting; for example, as we have already said, never again shall we countenance the splitting up of the workers in any basic industry into craft unions as the price of admission into the A. F. of L.

Were industrial unions to be established in a number of basic industries and to be refused admission into the A. F. of L. on self-respecting terms, then there would be a real mass basis for the establishment of a federation of industrial unions. That would be a very different thing from the attempt to establish a sectarian federation of sectarian unions. The former would mean increasing the power of the workers; the latter means destroying the power of the workers by splits.

### Unions Cannot Be Puppets

8. Which suggests one other fundamental of C.P.L.A. policies toward the unions, namely, that we are absolutely opposed to the building of unions which are mere puppets in the hands of any particular political party, no matter what that party may be. We conceive it to be the duty of labor political and educational organizations to carry on propaganda among the masses through the unions as well as in other ways. We regard it as absurd that anyone should be regarded as a good standing member of a class conscious political party and then be permitted to act as a labor faker or reactionary on the trade union field. As a matter of organization policy, however, we believe it is fatal for any particular political party to exercise mechanical dictation over the policies of the trade unions, just as it would be for the trade unions to mechanically dictate the policies of a labor political party. The unions, we emphasize, are essentially mass organizations bringing together the workers, regardless of

their religious, social, political, and economic views and affiliations.

9. In other words, the C.P.L.A. emphasizes on the economic field the policy of the united front. In the concrete struggles of the workers to organize, in strikes and lockouts, unity is essential. We are opposed to those who, whether they be Communists or reactionaries, undertake to confuse and divide the workers in the midst of strike struggles. There have been instances where the C.P.L.A. has temporarily withheld its criticism of reactionary organizations in the midst of strikes just as there have been numerous instances where it has refused in any way to interfere with Communist unions in the midst of actual struggles, because we are so firmly convinced of the evil of dividing the workers' ranks in the midst of these conflicts, the more so because the great masses of American workers so completely lack any real training in economics and politics. Many of them who are being organized or are on strike today are in actual touch with unionism for the first time in their lives.

There are a number of other points in the program of the C.P.L.A. on the economic field which do not, however, deal directly with trade union tactics and which, therefore, we pass over with a mere word here—as, for example, a nation-wide system of social insurance with no contributions from the workers; independent labor political action; recognition of Soviet Russia and opposition to militaristic and imperialistic efforts to destroy the Soviet Republic; opposition to militarism and imperialism in the United States; promotion of the international solidarity of labor; and genuine workers' education.

Finally, what have been the concrete achievements of the C.P.L.A. in this whole field? Space permits us only the briefest and most sketchy answer.

In the first place, when the Communist Party and its affiliated organizations abandoned the role of criticism within the A. F. of L. and the efforts to maintain a left wing opposition in the old unions, the C.P.L.A. kept at the job harder and more vigorously than ever. In the second place, when all other organizations largely abandoned the effort to agitate for the establishment of a mass labor party in the United States, the C.P.L.A. continued to stress this demand. When other organizations abandoned the policy of the united front on the economic field, the C.P.L.A. continued to

emphasize the correctness of this policy and in a number of concrete situations did all in its power to put it into effect.

The C.P.L.A. shared in the leadership of the campaign for unemployment insurance and particularly in gaining the adoption by militant and progressive elements of the principle that no contributions should be required from the workers.

Except for Communist efforts, practically all of the effective workers' education being carried on in the United States today is being done by C.P.L.A. elements and under C.P.L.A. inspiration, though, of course, in many instances not directly under C.P.L.A. auspices or control.

### Southern Agitation

The preliminary work of agitation and education in the South was begun by C.P.L.A. elements a number of years ago. They participated actively in the Southern organization campaign so long as there seemed to be a chance that the campaign would be vigorously and militantly carried on. When utterly mistaken policies were adopted in that organizing campaign, the C.P.L.A. withheld its activity, though refraining from attack in cases where strikes were actually in progress. The C.P.L.A. has continued to present its criticism of the shortcomings of this organizing campaign and today its representatives and members are still in the field in the South, educating the Southern workers and preparing them for sound, concrete activities. In passing, it may be well to nail again the falsehood frequently uttered by the Communists to the effect that the C.P.L.A. elements made the disastrous settlement in Elizabethton and the bad first settlement in the Marion Strike. The fact of the matter is that the C.P.L.A. immediately and vigorously criticized both of those settlements.

As recent issues of LABOR AGE have reported in detail, an important piece of educational work is being carried on by C.P.L.A. in the steel industry, and recently our representative was largely influential in the movement by which steel workers in Mansfield, Ohio, compelled the company to revoke a wage cut; a united front of various elements in Paterson and vicinity is being brought about by the C.P.L.A., looking toward an organization campaign in that silk center, and the Paterson elements are in turn joined up with those in Allentown, and elsewhere in Pennsylvania, looking

(Continued on Page 29)

# Rebellion Flames

By ARTHUR G. McDOWELL

## *Through Coal Fields of Western Pennsylvania*

At the time this article is being written there are between thirty and forty thousand coal miners in the bituminous sections of western Pennsylvania, eastern Ohio and northern West Virginia on strike. In western Pennsylvania where the strike originated less than a month ago, and where the majority of the strikers are located, two striking miners lie dead at the hands of deputy sheriffs, a score more lie in hospitals from the same cause, perhaps a full hundred, including several women are in jail with heavy bonds fixed. Mass picketing is a spectacular feature of each day's report from the field as National Miners Union adherents parade as many as two thousand strong before some of the larger mines.

All three Pittsburgh daily capitalist newspapers unite in a chorus to demand that operators accept the terms of and recognize the United Mine Workers and one operator had his pit boss and mine superintendent go from house to house asking the miners to join the Lewis organization.

### **A Cloud No Larger Than A Man's Hand**

Sporadic and isolated strikes of individual mines have marked the record in the Pittsburgh district since last fall. The last week of January saw three miners go on strike and the first week of February saw four more suddenly walk out in sympathy. For a moment it seemed as if a general movement might be afoot. Then months of silence.

In the closing weeks of April newspapers carried an insignificant item on the march of 300 miners and their families from Avella, a mining town in Washington county near the Ohio line and southwest of Pittsburgh to the county seat, "Little" Washington. The group was met at the town limits by city police, county detectives and state police, and halted. A committee was allowed to enter the city and interview the county commissioners who were told that the miners were starving and must have food. The matter

was referred to the Poor Directors who promised to "investigate".

A few days later the Pittsburgh Press began to publish a series of articles in Avella, revealing that nearly 600 people were actually experiencing starvation, adults and children living on grass and dandelions. The first article appeared on the front page of the Press the same day that Dr. Clyde L. King, Governor Pinchot's cabinet member in charge of unemployment relief publicly declared that there was no suffering or want known to exist anywhere in the state that was not being adequately cared for by existing agencies. Darlington Hoopes, one of the two Socialist Representatives in the Pennsylvania General Assembly, rose on the floor of the House on the following morning and read the Pittsburgh Press story into the record side by side with Dr. King's statement. Denouncing King's statement as criminally callous and an incitement to violence of the sufferers from unemployment, the Socialist representative warned members of the House, who had been highly offended at the tactics of a communist sponsored Hunger March that had invaded the Capitol the day before, that this was only the beginning of what they might expect and that they (the legislature) would be strictly responsible for anything that happened if they adjourned without taking adequate steps to meet the unemployment crisis.

The tear jerkers of the Pittsburgh paper brought temporary relief to the starving ones of Avella, in the form of charitable contributions from philanthropic Pittsburghers. The Pittsburgh Press, wealthy Scripps-Howard unit, pleased with apparent concrete results assigned William White, a staff man, to investigate the whole western Pennsylvania coal fields and write a series of articles on general conditions which in due course appeared, retail-

ing the chaos of the industry and the grief and suffering of the miners in graphic fashion. White noted that the left wing National Miners Union with headquarters in Pittsburgh was beginning to be very active throughout almost the entire section that he visited.

On May 28th the Pennsylvania General Assembly gaily adjourned early in the evening, sine die, having killed every bill aimed in any way at relief of the staggering amount of unemployment and attendant suffering. The Musmanno bills abolishing the Coal and Iron Police were among those strangled in the closing hours of the session, a powerful coal operator's attorney in the Senate, Senator Rial from Westmoreland county being the agent. Two anti-labor injunction bills, sponsored by Governor Pinchot's administration, were passed in the same closing hours by the Governor's foes, and much to the surprise of the Governor himself.

### **The Storm Breaks**

Shortly before noon of the 28th, a few hours before the Assembly at Harrisburg, the state capital, adjourned, 300 miners near Avella struck with the cry, "Fight starvation! better to starve to death under the trees than in the hole." The word spread to other tipples and by nightfall 700 men were "out". Numbers swelled to more than a thousand the following morning.

Pat Fagan, President of District No. 5 of the U.M.W.A. at Pittsburgh, welcomed the strike as a further revival of his organization which was negotiating a contract for some miners on strike at Scotts Run, West Virginia. The West Virginia contract was signed the middle of the following week at a 30c per ton scale, the same scale obtaining at certain mines in Pennsylvania where the U.M.W. has

shells of locals, but is not recognized nor given a contract.

Meanwhile, National Miners Union leaders scoffed at the idea that the decrepit U.M.W. had any support among the strikers. Their program, they announced, was to spread the strike, and the strike spread like a prairie fire. By the end of the first week seven thousand were out. Newspapers made light of the struggle by featuring the rival claims of the two unions. Sunday, June 7, National Miners Union leaders were busy throughout the Pittsburgh district, and rumors flew far and wide. Sheriff Bob Cain of Allegheny declared he would deputize 10,000 men if necessary to "preserve order".

Monday morning the storm broke full blast in Washington county, center of the strike, when columns of pickets, thousands strong, swept along the public roads, halting only when their dust clouds were blotted out with the white choking tear gas of scores of deputies, Coal and Iron Police and State Cossacks, and their lines broken by horseback charges.

Sheriff Seaman, with deputies and a dozen mounted cossaks, had barred the highway to the Westland mine of the Pittsburgh Coal company from long before sunrise. At dawn the murmur of the approach of some three thousand miners and their wives and children was heard, and, upon the appearance of the leaders, the sheriff called them to halt. Marching confidently upon public property, the strikers roared defiance and rolled on. In a matter of seconds a barrage of more than fifty tear gas bombs was released on the column which defied all previous experience by driving groping and choking straight through the cloud. Then the police charged, trampling and clubbing and, finally, shooting, until, with nothing but bare fists and sticks and stones from the roadside, the strikers broke and fled, pursued and beaten for hundreds of yards.

A few miles away, where the closed town of Ellsworth cradles a mine of the Bethlehem Steel company, pickets had been met at the city line by police and deputies who blocked the highway with an overturned truck, and waited. Two columns of about 500 each converged at the Lincoln Hill mine near Washington, and, after demonstrating without disorder, moved on Ellsworth, where a drama similar to that at Westland was enacted. The Coal and Iron Police exhausted their tear gas and clubbed leaders in a vain effort to halt the march. Arrival of

mounted cossacks at the critical moment saved the day for the Steel Trust cops.

### The Awakening

With a start the rulers in the Pittsburgh district awoke to the realization that this was not a strike but a revolt. Miners listened to the call and the strike spread hourly. To Washington and Allegheny counties were added Westmoreland, Fayette and Green. National Miners Union organizers spread into Ohio.

The Pittsburgh Press on the evening of the 8th asked editorially "Why

with Vice President Van Bittner had signed an agreement for the men, also has partial control. The Governor of Pennsylvania, at the importunity of newspapers and business interests, offered to arbitrate between Pursglove and U.M.W. officials. The 18th of June at Harrisburg was set as the date.

Meanwhile the Governor's special investigator, H. S. Raushenbush, coal and power expert, declared after a short visit to the field that the strike was "purely a strike against hunger". The 12th of June saw the largest mine in the western Pennsylvania area on



Here is a typical picket line as it spreads the coal strike through the tri-state Pittsburgh district.

Not Revive the U.M.W.", and the next evening it said, "Let the whole Pittsburgh district and western Pennsylvania be organized. There will be no difficulty about wages or working conditions. In West Virginia organization has just been accomplished at wage scales lower than any reputable Pittsburgh operator is paying." The U.M.W. is not perfect, the ultra-reactionary Post Gazette admitted, but it should be dealt with in the face of the menace of the radical National Miners. The Hearst paper echoed the plea for the U.M.W.

Reluctantly U.M.W. District No. 5 President, Pat Fagan, yielded to the pressure, although he had told the Pittsburgh Central Labor Union the week before that after consultation with the International officials it had been decided not to get involved too deeply in the present struggle. Meetings were held in the towns of the Pittsburgh Terminal Coal company, where Samuel Pursglove, who had large interests in the Scotts Run properties in West Virginia where Fagan

strike when 1,400 out of 1,800 walked out of Vesta No. 4 near California. The following morning another hundred men joined the picket line in a body. Vesta No. 6, sister mine, with 500 came out the following week. At Crescent, near by, a mine of the Pittsburgh Coal company, had four machine guns mounted at the pit mouth; the roads to the mine were closed and guarded; a dry-cleaning merchant who would not ask miners to go back to work was refused admission to deliver his goods. State cossacks were brought from the eastern part of the state. The Governor announced that he would carry out his pledge to revoke all Coal and Iron Police Commissions July 1, and companies began to hire deputies in large numbers.

On June 16th the striking miners staged a giant demonstration in the form of a hunger march on "Little" Washington, county seat of Washington county. By truck and by foot the miners gathered from every corner of the county to swing through the city streets with their women and children,



ten thousand strong, while as many more watched. Fruitless demands were made on the county commissioners who listened respectfully to miners that a few months before they had barred from the city.

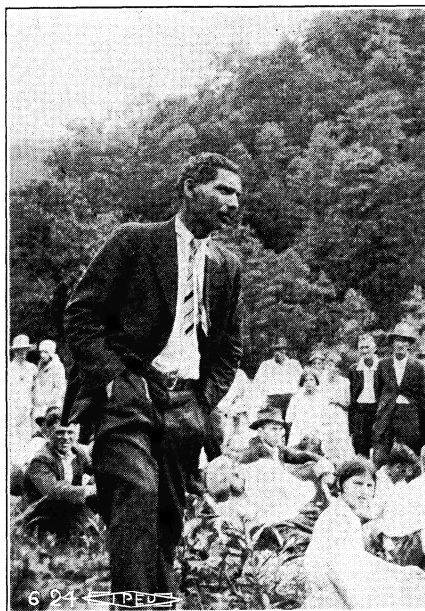
### The Injunction—Modern Weapon for Modern Mine

The strike spread into many places in a spontaneous wave without the National Miners Union actually taking part in preparation. One of these places was the Wildwood mine of the Butler Consolidated Coal company, 100 per cent mechanized mine, show place of mining machinery that is the last word in modernity. Four hundred men walked out, and on June 9, before the N.M.U. had accomplished organization, the company appeared in court to ask an injunction against the union. Judge Gardner, former district attorney of the Mellon machine, who was appointed to the bench by the Coal operator Governor Fisher, heard the application and instructed the company how to amend their application to make it proper. The next day National Miners Union officials were subpoenaed and brought along Maurice Schneirov, young Socialist lawyer, who so criticized the application that Gardner acknowledged the terms to be too severe and postponed consideration. Gardner, with seven other members of the bench, is up for re-election in November, and long conferences were held. On Monday, behold, not Judge Gardner but reactionary Rowand, not up for re-election for years to come, appeared.

Union officials were questioned in an attempt to prove that the National Miners Union was the Communist Party. The attempt failed, as did the attempt to show a single case of violence. The case was taken under advisement, and the next day, while hunger marchers were swinging through Washington, Pennsylvania streets, the injunction was granted without notice, setting forth prohibition of picketing and parading in terms more severe than the company had requested. The injunction outlawed assembly or parade on property, not only of the company but at or near the property or approaches to it, and the mine lies on the public road. Miners' leaders declared the injunction would be violated and the Socialist Party, in a public statement, assailed the honesty of the courts in shifting judges and said that the injunction opened the way for bloodshed and violence.

### Murder Most Foul

Sunday, June 21, at the park at Cheswick where, in 1927, state police broke up a Sacco-Vanzetti meeting with unexampled brutality, the National Miners Union staged a picnic addressed, among others, by William Z. Foster. A march of pickets on the Wildwood mine was planned. At the mine office next morning, while it was still dark, a sheriff's van drew up to add seven newly sworn officers to the deputies already at the mine. A reporter and a photographer from the Pittsburgh Post Gazette were present.



Negro speaking at mass meeting of W. Va. miners

At day break a fringe of miners appeared in line at the top of the steep hill leading to a group of houses on the public highway above the mine, about 500 yards up the road. The miners halted and waited for other groups who were on their way. Two cars carrying scabs came down the hill and were greeted with cries of shame, and a volley of stones.

The cars dashed up to the mine office and scabs with guns in their hands got out. A man in the second car said he had discharged his revolver at the crowd. Ten deputies jumped into the sheriff's van, including the seven nervous new men, holding the shot guns and riot guns in their hands that had just been passed out before the strikers appeared. When the van reached the top of the hill the deputies piled out, guns to their shoulders. Deputy Reel thought he saw Teresa Versillac drop some stones and attempted to arrest her, firing his revolver after her when she eluded him.

Angry miners closed in behind the woman leader, and Reel, who now claims that some of the miners fired first, emptied his gun into the crowd, and the other deputies and a scab, who had come along, opened fire with riot guns, firing through the smoke of two tear gas bombs point blank into the massed group of striking miners. Volley after volley was fired and the front line of the strikers was mowed down like wheat. About 130 rounds were fired, surrounding houses were riddled, and lives of sleeping children in at least one home endangered. Thirteen strikers were wounded, Peter Zigarac died after reaching the hospital, having seven slugs in his chest.

For fifteen minutes after the shooting had completely ended, deputies hunted high and low for strikers, herding them into the sheriff's van without even bothering to pick out the wounded. The desperately wounded and dying lay on the ground, unheeded, while the Post Gazette reporter pleaded in vain for help in getting the wounded men to the hospital. Charles Hasford, President of the Butler Consolidated Coal company and leader in the Lutheran church at Butler, Pa., stood by the van and pointed out the active strikers to the officers. When asked by the reporter if he had called an ambulance for the wounded, he replied "Christ no, why should I call an ambulance?" Frank Butler and his photographer finally secured the assistance of one deputy and loaded the wounded on a coal truck and sent them to a Pittsburgh hospital.

For hours after the massacre, deputies and state police searched houses for a mile around, illegally entering and arresting strikers, some fifty being lodged in Allegheny county jail on \$5,000 bail. Thomas Meyerscough, N.M.U. leader, was held on \$10,000. Sheriff Cain, who two weeks ago, by proclamation, barred all women and children from picket lines and parades, as a preparation for war, absolved his deputies from blame. Coroner, district attorney, and Governor launched perfunctory investigations.

"As far as I can see," announced the coroner, "the men (deputies) were conscientiously trying to enforce the injunction."

### A Concession?

Immediately on the heels of the Wildwood horror the Pittsburgh Terminal Coal company, which had wrecked the Governor Pinchot conference on the 18th, closed with U.M.W. officials in Pittsburgh on an agreement that carried substantially the same

(Continued on Page 28)

# The Socialist Party—

By LEONARD BRIGHT

## Working-Class or Middle-Class

**J.** C. KENNEDY'S review of Norman Thomas's "America's Way Out" in the last month's issue of LABOR AGE is by far the most penetrating analysis of the author's position I have yet seen. Thomas must have known that his rejection of the Marxian philosophy as the sole basis of Socialist theory would create a stir among the Marxians. What is remarkable is that this kind of a review was written by a Marxian Socialist not a member of the Socialist Party while those known to be Marxian scholars within the Party have withheld their criticism.

Dr. Kennedy has gone beyond mere consideration of the philosophical aspect of the question. He has raised certain issues as to parliamentarism, the Russian revolution and the relations of the Socialist Party toward the unions which are a standing challenge to American Socialists. If as a result the Socialist Party is led to grapple seriously and speedily with these questions, he will have made a distinct contribution.

Had the reviewer stopped at this point his case would have been well nigh unassailable. One might feel that full justice had not been done to Norman Thomas, the leader and man of action, but it was the book presenting Thomas's position, whether adequately or not, that was under review. When, however, Comrade Kennedy considers the possibilities of the Socialist Party swinging toward liberalism, he is not on such solid ground.

To determine whether this is likely to occur present trends within that Party require evaluation, and consideration must also be given to the probable effects of outside forces. Naturally, it is not easy for a non-member to appreciate important trends and leading elements who sponsor them within the Party. As I see them, there are four such: 1. Reformers. 2. Pragmatists. 3. Old timers and 4. Militants.

The first category has lost hope for the present in the working class. It regards Marxian philosophy as metaphysics and believes that Socialism will not be realized, as one of its leading spokesmen put it, "for generations

and generations." Therefore, it is interested in appealing to voters as consumers rather than as producers. Speeches and statements of its leaders often are indistinguishable from those of progressive Democrats. Above everything this element agitates for clean government, and is tremendously excited about transit unification and government ownership of electric power. It places a great deal of hope in the League for Independent Political Action and is indifferent to the Conference for Progressive Labor Action. It is a respectable group, and oh, how it loves publicity in the capitalist press!

Next we have the second group, whom I shall call the pragmatists. Its leaders combine energy with ability, and while they boast they are neither Marxians nor doctrinaires they agree that without the support of large masses of the workers there can be no fundamental change. They help in strikes and in strike relief and although for a time they displayed strong reformistic tendencies there has been something of a turn-about within the past year. The group is in sympathy with the aspirations of the Soviet Union, fights for vigorous, clean unionism, is clear cut on such issues as anti-Lewisism, and therefore, is friendly to the C.P.L.A. Since, however, a miracle has not occurred and progressives have not made as much headway within the A. F. of L. as was hoped, it is not as enthusiastic about the C.P.L.A. as it was when it was organized. Its leaders have an excellent understanding of American psychology and know how to get a hearing. They have the ability to inspire young people, get a good vote and have the knack of getting publicity.

Thirdly, come the old timers. They are the administration, holding lead-

ing party positions, are expert parliamentarians, know the value of a good machine and can be ruthless when their leadership is threatened. While they are Marxians their brand of Marxism smacks of sterile dogmatism, something which Marx himself condemned. They are complacent, over-cautious, lack imagination, initiative and energy, although, of course, there are a few honorable exceptions. Like the first group they are respectable, and abhor spectacular methods. When they go in for mass demonstrations they do so with fear and trepidation and only because of pressure from the ranks. They are antagonistic to Russia, although giving lip service to recognition of the Soviet Union, while their oracle declares that what is going on in Russia is not an experiment and in any event it is not a contribution to Socialism, defending this stand on Marxian grounds, if you please! On the other hand, they go into raptures over the German Social Democracy without realizing that young or newer American Socialists are disillusioned with Social Democrats, believing them to be more Democratic than Socialist. I.L.P. criticisms of MacDonald and Snowden cause the old timers to shudder. While they would like to see gangsterism, corruption, and underworld influences eliminated from unions where these evils have crept in, they prefer to hide their heads in the sand like ostriches refusing to recognize the situation, and, what is more, because of adherence to an old time policy since the split with Daniel De Leon of "Hands off the unions," when the situation was different, do nothing about it. They are hostile to the C.P.L.A. but as a rule give it the silent treatment for fear it will make headway among Socialists dissatisfied with the Party's policy on unionism. It is a group that lives on its past,

### An Evaluation of Influences and Trends Within the Party

and its leaders are still idolized by members who have been in the Party a score of years or more who remember them as capable, self-sacrificing Socialists. However, it is totally unable to inspire young people, and while it would be willing to yield leadership to younger people it has lost contact with them, and therefore is afraid and puzzled about the future.

## The Militants

Finally, there are the militants, a group less than two years in existence, consisting of younger, enthusiastic Socialists. It accepts the Marxian philosophy and vigorously opposes liberal or reformist trends, insisting that immediate demands be tied up with the ultimate Socialist goal in propaganda work. It wants action and favors large demonstrations and other spectacular methods as means to dramatize the struggle of the workers. Its members place chief reliance on the working class elements. From the beginning of its organization it has demanded that the Party "Face toward the workers." It has led the fight to have the Party change its policy with regard to the unions, and succeeded in New York City conventions in obtaining as high as 40 per cent of the vote for a program in accord with that of the C.P.L.A. If the militants had their way the Socialist Party would stress industrial unionism as the only way to organize the trustified basic industries, and the Party would also encourage young people to engage in the pioneer work of organizing the unorganized and be helpful in every way in this task. Its leading spirits are members of the C.P.L.A., and the group as a whole is in hearty sympathy with that organization. In its international orientation the group favors the programs of the Left Wing Socialist Parties such as the British I.L.P., the Norwegian Labor Party, the Polish Bund and the Dutch and German Left Socialists. It applauds the heroic efforts being made in Russia to build a Socialist economy and also works for a friendly policy toward Russia by the Party. While it lacks experience, is weak in oratory and parliamentary strategy, and is not as effective as it might be, it has had a healthy influence on the Party as an aggressive, intelligent opposition.

Having appraised the various important trends and elements within the Party, let us examine recent changes in the composition of the membership and the effect of the economic situation on the organization.

Ever since the bursting of the

"prosperity" bubble its membership has been growing. Applicants have come from all walks of life; most of them are either manual or white collar workers; there are a considerable number of professional people, some foremen and superintendents and occasionally a contractor or a manufacturer enters the ranks. Incidentally, recent Party statistics show more union members in the Party than would appear. Perhaps the reason a contrary impression prevails is that they are not as articulate as the white collar or professional groups.

Comrade Kennedy is perturbed about the middle-class elements in the Socialist Party. How many white collar workers earning less than manual workers or how many professionals may be included in this category is hard to say, but be it remembered that even lawyers and doctors have been known to suffer extreme hardships in a depression. In any event, the danger of middle class elements influencing the Party toward liberalism is probably more imaginary than real. Those interested may refer to what Karl Marx had to say about this question in the "Communist Manifesto." Let them read the paragraph beginning, "The lower strata of the middle class," in which he explains, "Thus the proletariat is recruited from all classes of the population," and further on adds, "entire sections of the ruling class . . . supply the proletariat with fresh elements of enlightenment and progress."

Differentiation should be made, however, between weary old timers who are in the middle class and new members of the Party coming from this element. Now it will be realized that recent economic developments have dealt this class tremendous blows. Their stock holdings liquidated, businesses either bankrupt or heavily in debt, forced to seek employment when there is no employment to be had, resentment on the part of a large section of the middle class against capitalism grows. They are especially bitter and eager for action because they have become recent victims of the depression. Is it any wonder then that when they join the Party and survey the contending forces struggling for leadership they should line up either with the pragmatists or with the militants? And this is just what they have been doing. They don't get excited about reforms. They have taken the step of joining the Socialist Party because they are disillusioned with capitalism. It is a new social order that they want. Neither

do they become impressed with reference to the Party's past glories. When an old fogey begins talking about what happened 25 or 30 years ago, groans are heard, especially from the young people. No, these are fresh, vigorous elements that have learned that they must line up with the working class to overthrow the system.

It may be argued that some of these middle-class elements might leave the Socialist Party if "prosperity" were to return. That is possible. For that reason, genuine Socialists in the final analysis, recognize that to achieve a fundamental change dependence must be placed primarily on the working class.

## Reformists on Toboggan

The reformist group, it should be noted, is already on the toboggan, as a recent convention of the Party in New York showed. An unemployment insurance bill submitted by the administration called for contributions from the state and employers. A leading spokesman for the first group argued for a tri-partite arrangement, with workers also contributing, the point he made being that too great a burden should not be placed on employers, or else they would leave the state! Whereupon the militant forces united with the administration in giving him such a drubbing that he pleaded, politician-like, that he was not serious about the proposal. As for the old timers, as I have pointed out, they are losing out, and it is just a question of time before they will have to yield to a combination of the pragmatic and militant groups. Except on the emphasis placed on reforms the latter are much in agreement. Norman Thomas as the foremost leader of the pragmatists usually supports the militants, recognizing that the hope of the party is with that group. He knows, too, that there is a strong trend to the militant position in other parts of the country. The militants in turn admire Thomas. Even though they regret he is not a Marxist they feel that his energy and ability to throw himself actively into various working class struggles will lead him as a realist to work hand in hand with them. This explains why a leader of the militant group was able to say with the approval of his fellow militants, "I would rather be wrong with Thomas than right with Hillquit."

The old time Marxians in the Party unquestionably have a theoretical case against Thomas. Probably through sheer indolence they prefer to rest on their past laurels as Marxian scholars. And yet assuming that "America's



"Way Out" is entirely out of line with the Marxian position on the class struggle, although as I understand Thomas's position, it is rather a matter of emphasis than anything else, it will have to be admitted that Thomas's entire career as a Socialist shows that he recognizes and acts on the theory of the class conflict.

### Courage at Passaic

When the Passaic strike was on he courageously went there to lend a hand and was jailed while Marxian scholars in New York were considering whether they should risk contamination by participating in a Communist led strike. In the raising of relief for strikers in Elizabethton, Marion, West Virginia, Paterson and elsewhere he has aided materially in the struggle of the workers. In the fight for a clean Labor Movement, too, Thomas has spoken clearly and unequivocally where other Socialist leaders have been either evasive or silent. As recently as May 2 he practically invited certain Socialist labor leaders to leave the Party. In his "Timely Topics," in the *New Leader* of that date, he said:

"... With very few exceptions our nominally Socialist unions and their representatives have either acquiesced with, or gone along with this Tammany policy of the A. F. of L. Their delegates do not attend the central body or if they do are silent even when the Socialist Party is outrageously attacked. It is a well known fact that some nominally radical unions have directly or indirectly contributed to the campaign funds of Democratic judges and District Attorneys. Crain himself was one of the beneficiaries. . . .

"The only people who ever tried to call me off from attacking the bad record of a fixer in office, a record reported to me by a Socialist attorney, were union leaders. It seems to me as plain as daylight that the Socialist Party wants no members who will not within the unions fight on Socialist lines. Officials and representatives of so-called Socialist or radical unions who intend by silence or more open approval to play the game of Ryan and Tammany have no place whatever in the Socialist Party. . . ."

There speaks a true Socialist, a forthright man and a realist who

knows that mere lip service to Marxian dogmas is not enough.

All of which should indicate that there is no swing to liberalism in sight in the Socialist Party. That trend which existed two or three years ago has largely been liquidated thanks to the militants who in the latter part of 1929 saw the danger. They were not the only ones though. The old time Marxians realized it, too, but lacked the initiative, or suffered from too much timidity, to carry on an effective fight against reformism. It was the militants who did that and rallied the Party to a more clear cut policy. And then the old timers chimed in with, "Me, too."

Economic conditions undoubtedly favor a swing to the left, hence, unless certain developments arise which are not visible at present the Socialist Party is heading in the right direction. It will obtain influence among, and win the allegiance of, the American workers the sooner the policies and methods advocated by the militants are adopted and active, energetic people who really believe in them are placed in leading Party position to carry them out.

## Hosiery Workers Battle in Philadelphia

By EDDIE RYAN

**L**AST October, when the weavers of the Hardwick-Magee Rug and Carpet Co., located in the heart of the Kensington mill district of Philadelphia, were given a cut in wages of from 10 to 40 per cent, although there were murmurs of discontent, the men being unorganized, had to submit.

On January 3, however, when the firm forced the workers to sign up to another "readjustment in wages"—that is what their efficiency expert named Rice called it—which meant another cut ranging from 10 to as high as 65 per cent, rebellion broke out, and on Monday morning, January 5, when they reported for work, the men refused to start their looms. This, despite the lurid threats of Expert Rice.

Instead, they elected a committee which demanded that the wage cut be immediately rescinded. The firm's reply to this, voiced through Expert Rice, was that 36 of the older men, some of whom had been with the company as long as 45 years, would be discharged. This, said generous Mr. Rice, would give the younger weavers

steadier work, and would more than make up for the wage cut.

The answer of the men to this kind consideration was—"strike!" And the entire weaving department, 252 men, marched over to the Lace Curtain Weavers' Hall and organized themselves into a union. On the following day, at a meeting in the Hosiery Workers' Hall, they joined Carpet Weavers Local 890 of the United Textile Workers. The committee elected to interview the bosses was told that the firm would deal with them only as individuals.

Here is where the good old Y. M. C. A. entered. To break the strike the bosses had scabs imported from out of town. These scabs the Y. M. C. A. very considerably agreed to house for the bosses, and even to send food over to the mill for them. Of course the Y, being an *impartial* organization, does not take sides in industrial disputes. Oh, no!

However, by picketing the Y, the strikers have succeeded in stopping meals being sent over to the mill. Public sentiment was not 100 per cent

with the Young Men's Christian Association. But even public sentiment has not yet been able to have the scabs put out.

Next August the National agreement in the full fashioned hosiery industry expires. For this reason the bosses are adopting a belligerent attitude and will probably take advantage of the depression and attempt to destroy the union. This means a fight involving at least 10,000 workers in Philadelphia alone. It is felt here that if this battle is forced upon us by the anti-labor policies of the bosses it will be one of the most violent strikes that has ever taken place in the United States. Our people are fighting mad, and the public officials of the city are plainly worried.

One of the most encouraging results of this turmoil in the Kensington district has been the change in attitude on the part of mill workers towards the Socialist Party. The brutality of the police and the prosecutions by the courts have resulted in tremendous sentiment for the Independent Labor Party, and all the textile workers are now solidly behind it.

# USSR's Sowing Campaign

By FRANK L. PALMER

**I**N a recent issue of *LABOR AGE*, I wrote of the war being waged by the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union against ignorance, disease and poverty. One of the most important and difficult battles in that war has just been fought—and won. It was as dramatic as any military battle and had many of the characteristics of an armed struggle.

In the Soviet struggle against poverty, the victory over the land is most important. Russia is largely agricultural and will be for many years. The greatest industry is the production of food. That is the foundation on which all else is built.

Last year the peasants had an excellent year and produced a great crop, with the result that some 80 to 100 million bushels of wheat were put on the world market to pay for industrial machinery and great excitement caused thereby. But the capitalists of the rest of the world said, "Wait, 1930 was a good year but difficult times will come; the weather will not always be favorable to good crops".

That prediction came true in 1931. The spring was late and cold and wet. Here was an army of 100 million people mobilized for a great advance but it could not move through the mud. May 1 came and the report went out that Soviet planting was 50 million acres behind 1930. American newspapers carried stories of the failure of the 5-Year Plan. "You can't plan weather over a sixth of the earth's surface," they pointed out.

Then came a new mobilization of that army of 100 million people. On one state farm a Komsomol (Communist Youth) brigade said that their quota had been set at 12,500 acres; they were already late; they would sow 15,000 acres instead. This was typical. As an army prepares for an important offensive, so they prepared for this offensive. The equipment was brought out and tested. Drills were held when all had to be ready for the advance. Shortages were discovered and rush orders sent out for more tractors. At the last minute the cities were stripped of machinists and autos, and repairmen were rushed by car from spot to spot to keep the tractors and the drills going.

Finally the order, "over the top" came. On Gigant, the biggest wheat

farm in the world, every record crashed. Instead of sowing 265,000 acres in 10 days, they sowed 288,000 acres in nine days—then left to help the collectives and the peasants.

## All Records Broken

The reports came in early in May that all records for sowing were being broken. But the sowing season was moving north still more rapidly. "It is not fast enough," the press cried. "Faster, faster, faster." The tractors were equipped with lights and run in three shifts, all night. From 15 million to 20 million to 25 million to 28 million acres in a 5-day week, the records climbed. It had never been done before but the critical offensive in the crucial year of the 5-Year Plan was at stake and no one had ever seen an army of 100 million fight poverty as one man before.

Finally in late June the figures were practically all in. From the middle of June there had been one great celebration of victory across the Soviet Union. Now it has become clear why they celebrated.

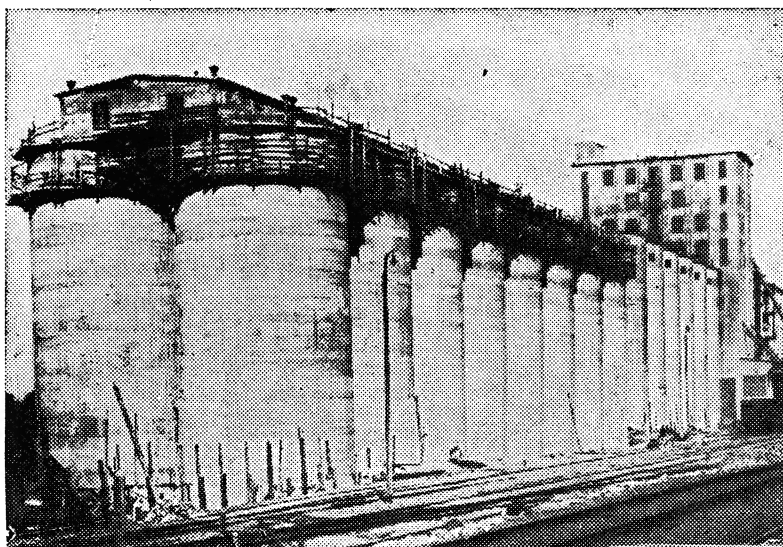
For that 50 million acres of lag on May 1 had entirely been eliminated and the sowing for this spring on June 15 had passed last year's by more than five million acres! The program for this spring of 250 million acres

had only been 93 per cent completed with 230 million acres sown but the bad weather start had been defeated, just the same. The united will of the army of 100 million had won.

Then it became clear as to why the victory had been achieved. Half of the peasants are in collectives, half on their own farms. The socialized half had planted 61 per cent of the area sown. The private-farm half had planted 29 per cent of the acreage. One-half the peasants had sunk under the late spring handicap; the united, socialized, organized half had swept over the trenches victoriously. Of the 230 million acres, 141 million had been planted by the collective farms, 21 million by the state farms and 68 million by the peasants.

There is further significance in those figures. The individual peasant planted 60 per cent of his program, the state farms and collectives far exceeded their plans. If there had been no state farms or collectives, apparently the planting program would all have fallen down 40 per cent or 100 million acres. Two short years ago there were no collectives or state farms to amount to anything. The drive for collectivization of the last two years meant 80 million acres more crop for the war against poverty, ignorance and disease—800 million bushels of wheat perhaps, the average American crop.

Truly a tremendous battle in that war has been won!



A new grain elevator of 41,000 tons capacity now under construction in Moscow.

# The Firing Line Extends

**S**OUTH of the Mason and Dixon Line new activity is afoot. Larry Hogan, hero of Marion, has returned to Dixie. Down in North Carolina and elsewhere he is establishing units of the Southern Industrial League, which are also forming into branches of the C. P. L. A. During the past month the Southern papers carried broadcast stories of Hogan's work as southern representative of the Conference for Progressive Labor Action. Larry's return is a fulfillment of the promise that the South is not to be forgotten, and that Southern workingmen and workingwomen will make another fight for freedom.

Coming North from the textile battleground, there is West Virginia and its miners, with whom the C. P. L. A. is continuing its vigorous cooperation. The story up to date is told on another page. As many C. P. L. A.-ers as possible have gone down to the hill country, to aid in the struggle there. The Labor Committee for West Virginia Miners' Relief is supplementing the effort being put forth by the Emergency Committee for Strikers' Relief. Every cent that can possibly be raised is needed in West Virginia.

Speaking of miners, the Policy Committee has not left its work undone. We have also an account of happenings out West, particularly in Illinois, in this issue. A. J. Muste was appointed as special representative of the C. P. L. A. at the Springfield district convention on July 6. The revolt against Lewisism therefore continues in Illinois as elsewhere.

Then, there is the Brooklyn Edison campaign, which has been attended by large meetings, extension of organization and wider public interest in the issue. In the Edison fight the most powerful utility combine in the country is involved. There are bound up in it the utility issue, the question of unemuloyment and the matter of organization.

The organization campaign in the Brooklyn Edison Company has taken certain distinct steps forward in the last few weeks. The Organization Committee with which the C.P.L.A. is cooperating, found it almost impossible heretofore to bring the issue of the lay-off of over 2,000 men and the general labor policy of the company, to the attention of the public due to

**Larry Hogan Brings C. P. L. A. to Dixie . . . Organization Advancing in Brooklyn Edison . . . Paterson Drive to Open . . . The Miners' District Convention in Illinois . . . Workers' Committees Appeal to C. P. L. A. . . .**

the tremendous pressure this public utility corporation exerts upon the press. Happily events are working in our favor. For instance, the recent decision of the New York State Public Service Commission granting an increase in electric rates of from 20 to 40 per cent for the poorest class of consumer, has given us an additional issue for attack against the company, which we have linked up with our campaign.

The Organization Committee has been able to secure the cooperation of Congressman Fiorella H. LaGuardia, who has issued a vigorous denunciation of the policies of the Brooklyn Edison Company. "How can this Company", asks LaGuardia, "in the face of conceded increase in business be permitted to decrease its force and throw thousands of men out of work, thereby placing tens of thousands of innocent victims in need and making them objects of charity?"

To this attack Matthew S. Sloan, president of Brooklyn Edison Company was compelled to issue an immediate reply in defense of the company. LaGuardia followed this up with an open attack at a mass meeting arranged by the Organization Committee at the Brooklyn Borough Hall Plaza. There is every indication that the question of the labor policy of the Brooklyn Edison Company will be brought up in the coming session of Congress, when the Power Trust will come up for discussion.

The result of the Committee's breaking the *cordon sanitaire* which existed heretofore has been the building of a feeling of confidence among the Edison men in their organization and its power to fight the company.

At the last meeting of the New York Central Trades and Labor Council Abraham Lefkowitz, delegate of the Teachers Union, introduced a resolution attacking the "anti-social policy of the Brooklyn Edison Company". The resolution attacked the lay-offs, the deprivation of the vacation money of the laid-off men, in spite of its

marked increased earnings, its demand for an increase in rate base, founded upon excess and fictitious valuation, the recent increase in electric rates, and called upon Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Public Service Commission to halt "this bold and unprecedented effort to mulct the workers of our city at a time when the effects of the depression makes such increases doubly oppressive". This resolution was carried unanimously by the 300 delegates assembled at the meeting.

Organizationally the campaign has entered upon a new phase. The men are being organized into secret squads in each gang, department and bureau of the company. These squads consist of two, three or more men, known to each other as 100 per cent reliable, who meet separately, but who maintain contact with the Organization Committee. Effective distribution of the *Live Wire* at the power houses, the pay line and the office of the company has been a major step in this phase of the campaign.

On June 4, a protest meeting was held before the offices of the Brooklyn Edison Co. by the C.P.L.A., receiving much publicity. The *N. Y. Daily News* of June 5 reports it as follows:

## **Rap Brooklyn Edison Co. Sacking 1,600 Employees**

The recent dismissal of 1,600 employees by the Brooklyn Edison Company yesterday drew 250 men and women to a meeting held in the street at Pearl and Willoughby Streets, Brooklyn, under auspices of the Conference for Progressive Labor Action, where speakers protested the company's action.

The meeting was held in front of the main plant of the Brooklyn Edison Company. Louis F. Budenz and Benjamin Mandell, officers of the conference, were the speakers. Budenz said that in Canada consumers of electricity pay only 2 cents per kilowatt hour, while the Brooklyn Edison Company, with the approval of the Public Service Commission, charges 7 cents.



S. L. Levich, who said he was secretary of the "Organization Committee of the Brooklyn Edison Company employees", criticized and questioned the statement of Matthew S. Sloan, president of the company, that the employees dismissed had been employees on a temporary basis at the height of the business depression, with the object of affording employment to men whose services were not really necessary to the company.

At the meeting a petition calling upon Mayor Walker to investigate the action of the Brooklyn Edison Company in dismissing the 1,600 employees was circulated for signature.

As a result of the C.P.L.A.'s spirited campaign, the Brooklyn Edison has announced that it will not lay off 1,500 men whom it had intended to discharge. The New York Edison, at the same time, has also halted lay-offs which it contemplated. This latter encouraging accomplishment has led to the request for organization in the New York Edison, a request which will be heeded insofar as our resources allow us. The workers begin to feel the helpfulness of organized effort, and that something can be accomplished by organized agitation.

### Paterson Drive Imminent

Twice a week in Paterson, meanwhile, the negotiations between the United Textile Workers and the Associated Silk Workers have gone on, looking toward unity. The C. P. L. A. has played a conspicuous part in these negotiations, and also in the undertaking that all elements of thought among

the workers shall be drawn into the organization work. At the first formal meeting of the Organization Committee, A. J. Muste was appointed chairman and Louis F. Budenz secretary. The respective committees, appointed in addition to the Organization Committee by the Textile Council of the U. T. W. in Paterson and by the Associated Silk Workers, chose A. J. Muste as impartial chairman and Louis F. Budenz as acting chairman in Muste's absence. The various negotiations have gone ahead in Paterson, with Budenz acting as chairman. A sub-committee of the two organizations has drawn up a proposed plan of amalgamation, after extended conferences. At this time—as we go to press—it looks very much as though the drive in Paterson and vicinity, toward which we have been working for the past six months, will now get into full swing. The objective of the drive is a general strike of silk workers in the Paterson district, which if it develops properly will be extended into the worsted and woolen mills of Passaic.

An increasing number of workers' committees have come to the C.P.L.A. with appeals for cooperation in the problems facing them as union groups or union members. Out of these visits, the C. P. L. A. has decided on a number of investigations of alleged racketeering and dictatorial practices in trade unions. If the Labor Movement is to move forward, it is clear that it must be purged of those elements which are retarding its progress and which are making some unions a prey to the underworld. Mussolini-like procedure in other unions is a serious detriment

to the advance of the movement. The A. F. of L. has shown itself incapable of coping with this development, and has encouraged dictatorial practices in certain unions by its own reactionary policies.

The Communist press has thought well enough of our activities to devote increasing attention to them. The *Daily Worker* states through Alexander Bittelman that we are the real "menace," and that the "Lovestoneites and the Trotzkyites are tools" of the C. P. L. A. When the present resources of the C. P. L. A. are looked in the face, this is a rather laughable statement. It seems as far fetched as the wild creation of a C. P. L. A. straw man in Lawrence, Mass., by *The Communist*. The C. P. L. A. deliberately stayed away from Lawrence and its recent labor difficulties, in order to give the National Textile Workers full swing. Otherwise, failure on their part would have been ascribed to us and as the fight developed we could have been of no help there. Nevertheless, the pages of *The Communist* speak of the C. P. L. A. having joined with the American Legion to break the Lawrence strike. This may furnish a splendid alibi for the failure of the Communists to adopt tactics which will be most resultful, but it is self-deception when published in a magazine devoted to "self-criticism." The Communists bother against the C. P. L. A. activities cannot be ascribed to our present strength, but rather to the fact that we are pointing to the "line" which radical labor forces will have to take in this country and which they mechanically refuse to follow, despite their energy and enthusiasm.

OUR little world's stock exchanges had a few days of glee. Wall Street almost beamed. A "boom" was on. Stocks were going up. In a little while the great Prosperity balloon was to come back to earth and be with us again.

### Debt Moratorium Prosperity Promise?

It all arose over the Great Engineer's promise that payment of the war debts would be postponed for a year. He who could help Belgian and Russian children but could not help American babies of the unemployed, was "the savior" of Germany. There would be no Fascist or Communist Revolution beyond the Rhine. Our "generosity," Roger Babson blubbered, was a giant stroke that would bring back the good old days.

Our "generous" move was simply another painful attempt of selfish International Capital to save its own neck. The unusual joy on Wall Street, for so small a step, gave an index of the hysterical dread that haunts the gambling dens of the Masters of Money. That joyfulness was short lived. A few days of sober thought brought forth the further realization that Germany, relieved from the debt burden, would be a Germany turning out more "cheap" goods in the markets of the world. Perhaps there was a

vague comprehension that the liniment of war debts would not cure the cancer eating at the Profit System.

At any rate, the market sagged. Dullness hit it, with low levels again becoming general. The Standard Statistics Company comes along with a statement that a new low level for the year in production was sunk to in May, "Prosperity" forecasters are looking with some anxiety at the figures for June. Reports of mid-year earnings are being awaited with confessed uneasiness. Dividend casualties in June were the highest in the year, according to the report of the Fitch Publishing Company. More dividends were omitted or deferred than in any month of the year.

The day of reckoning on the debt question has been coming at us right along since the time when John Maynard Keynes gave us "The Economic Consequences of the Peace". The world crisis brought it all to a head.

There is no indication that the debt action will make the winter of 1931 a whit lighter for the workers of this country. The question that it arouses is: "If Germany can be helped by a wave of the White House wand, why cannot the unemployed be aided in like manner?" The shabby treatment of the industrial unemployed indicate the contempt with which they are looked upon by the politicians.

# Recent Developments in the Miners' Situation

(From Miner Correspondents)

SOME of those who have been following the developments in the miners' union believed that nothing important could come out of the so-called Howat rank and file Convention held in St. Louis in April, because the small number of Illinois locals represented at that convention seemed to indicate that the miners of Illinois either did not care or did not dare launch a movement for a thorough house cleaning in the district and in the national organization. Others despaired of any good result from the St. Louis convention for an opposite reason, namely, that in spite of the somewhat small representation from Illinois the delegates at St. Louis did not then and there set up a new organization and invite the miners everywhere to come into it.

The Conference for Progressive Labor Action took the position that it would have been a wrong move to set up a new national union at St. Louis for at least two reasons. In the first place, the small number of Illinois miners who would have been in the new union at the start would have been in an exposed position and would immediately have been fired out of their jobs by the combined agency of the operators and the Illinois district officials. This, it seemed to the C.P.L.A. members, would have been a wanton sacrifice of good rank and file material. In the second place, it was held that for a mere handful of locals to set up a new national union might easily have been interpreted as an attempt on the part of a small minority to dictate to the mass of the miners. On the other hand, the C.P.L.A. contended that if the Illinois members of the Policy (Continuation) Committee appointed at St. Louis, together with others, would actively carry the story of the St. Louis convention to the rank and file, inform them of the Walker "sell-out" to Lewis, and continue the agitation for a new deal in the miners' union, the facts would eventually get to the rank and file of the miners and it could then be determined whether they were desirous of taking action.

Recent developments indicate that the position taken by the C.P.L.A. in this matter was correct. On Sunday, June 7, a rank and file conference of Illi-

nois miners was held at Staunton, Illinois. It is estimated that between 800 and a thousand miners were in attendance. Two hundred and ninety-six of these were delegates from local unions, 223 being credentialed delegates from 69 locals, 73 voluntary delegates from 12 locals. Every sub-district in the states was represented at this conference with the exception of sub-district No. 1, where there are very few active mines left. It was openly stated on the floor of this conference that this tremendous meeting of miners could not possibly have taken place if the Howat convention in St. Louis had not been held.

After the St. Louis Convention the Illinois members of the Policy Committee, Niedermiller and Humphries, together with others, took up throughout the state the work of making contacts with the locals and educating the membership on the situation in the union. They sent in resolutions to the district officials demanding that an honestly conducted district convention should immediately be held and suggesting that the locals would pay the expenses of their own delegates; this last proposal was to meet the excuse of the district officials that it would cost \$50,000 to hold a convention and that the district did not have the money with which to meet these expenses.

## The Belleville Meeting

The first visible result of this activity was a splendid meeting early in May at Belleville, Illinois. Although this meeting was attended chiefly by the elements which had been represented at the St. Louis Convention, there were some additional locals represented. Furthermore, the very fact that such a meeting could openly be held indicated that there was still real activity and that the miners in considerable numbers felt free to defy the district officials, which meant, of course, that these officials had not proved able to discipline miners taking part in the insurgent movement.

In the meantime, there was a new stir among a large number of locals in Southern Illinois, which had never joined the reorganized U.M.W. of A.,

probably largely because they were not convinced that Walker, Fishwick, etc. were any better than John L. Lewis. These locals had, therefore, continued to pay dues to the latter. They now met, stimulated to a considerable extent by the St. Louis movement, and demanded that a district convention should be held, or at least definitely called, before June 6. They announced that if this demand was not granted by the district officials, they would accept the invitation of the Belleville meeting and join with it in a meeting to be held at Staunton early in June.

The Southern Illinois Committee went to the district officials with their demand for an honest rank and file district convention. They were informed that the money to meet the expenses of such a convention was not in hand. They then took their demand to John L. Lewis, who informed them that he was powerless to compel the district officials to take any action in this matter. They thereupon announced that they would attend the Staunton meeting on June 6.

Convinced that the insurgent movement was making substantial gains, the district officials then announced that a convention would be held on October 6. This was obviously an attempt to put up an appearance of satisfying the rank and file demand and so to thwart the Staunton meeting. The figures we have already given as to the attendance at Staunton indicate clearly that the district officials did not succeed in this purpose.

## Staunton Blazes Trail

Ray Edmundson of Ziegler, Illinois, was the chairman of the Staunton meeting and William Keck, of East St. Louis, the secretary. A Policy Committee was elected, consisting of one member from each sub-district. Humphries of Springfield, one of the Illinois members of the Policy Committee of the St. Louis Convention, was elected to represent sub-district No. 4. The meeting had been opened at 10:15; the Policy Committee went into session at 11:40; the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 and reconvened at

1:00 when the Policy Committee was ready with its report.

The Secretary of the Policy Committee, Mack Leroy Trout, presented the report. After briefly reviewing the developments leading up to the meeting, the Policy Committee recommended that the Staunton meeting "issue a call to all local unions in district No. 12, regardless of affiliations, to meet in convention at Belleville, Illinois, on July 6, 1931, at 10:00 A. M".

This decision to hold a convention of the Illinois district on July 6 may prove to be epoch-making. If the Illinois miners rally to this meeting to clean house, set up an honest organization which will pursue a militant and realistic policy, this may prove the beginning of the crystallization of a revolt throughout the miners' union, which will either clean house in the U.M.W. of A. all along the line or draw practically all elements into a new organization, leaving the U.M.W. of A. a mere shell.

There remains one possibility which progressives have to bear in mind in trying to estimate future developments, namely, that some, at least, of the miners from Southern Illinois who have now come into the movement and who have during the past year been paying dues to Lewis may be working under instructions from that very astute

politician. It is also possible that these men may not be working under Lewis' instructions but that Lewis, nevertheless, figures that the present move will result in making the position of John Walker and the other district No. 2 officials impossible and that then by main force in collaboration with the operators he may be able to jump in and take control of the situation.

While present indications all are that genuine militant and progressive rank and filers are in control of the situation, the miners must now remember that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty and that between now and the Belleville convention every effort must be made to get all the locals in Illinois represented there and, in the second place, to make sure that no dishonest or disruptive elements gain influence in the situation.

### Miners in Revolt

Joe Tash, of the National Miners' Union, was refused the floor at the Staunton meeting; on the other hand Brant Scott, Vice-President of the West Virginia Mine Workers' Union, was given the floor and made a fine contribution by his brief though comprehensive summary of the progress of the organization campaign in West Virginia.

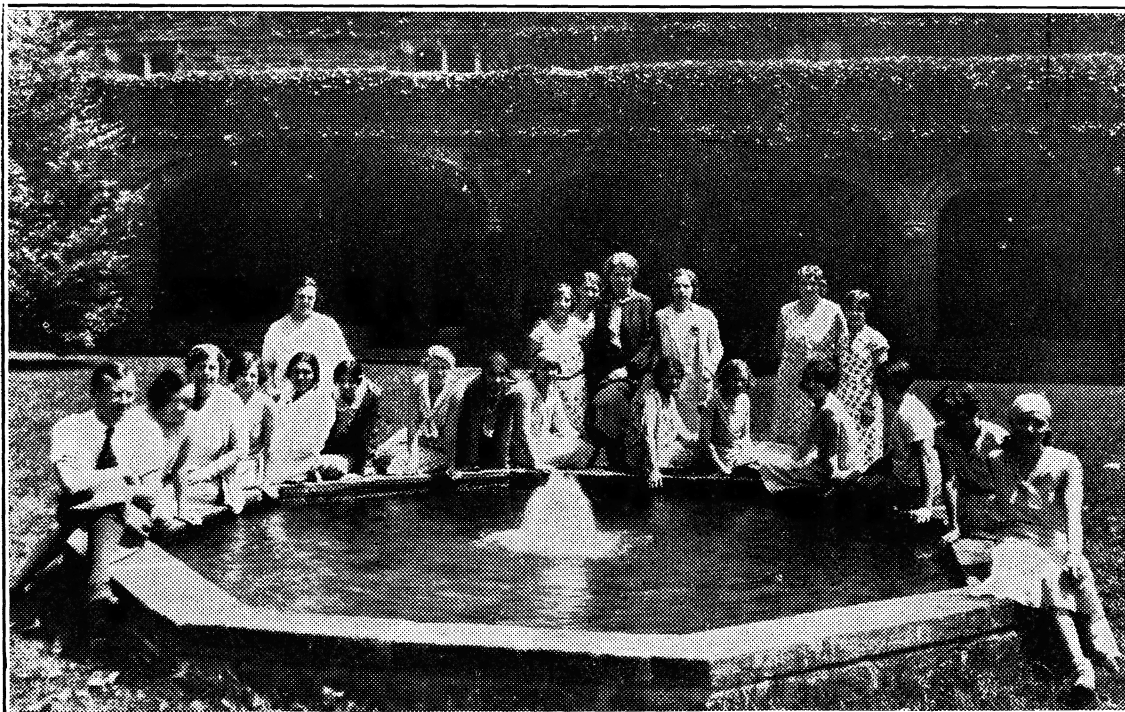
Other developments, particularly in West Virginia, are described elsewhere in this issue of *LABOR AGE*. It may be noted that everywhere among the bituminous miners the spirit of revolt seems to be growing. Strikes have been in progress, under U.M.W. leadership, in Pennsylvania and under Communist, or partly Communist leadership, in Pennsylvania and Ohio. Revolt, mainly under local leadership, is seething among the 40,000 miners in Harlan County, Kentucky.

Also John L. Lewis is up to his old game. In the Scott's Run District of West Virginia he has recently made a signed agreement with the operators for a wage scale much lower than prevails in other mines in that section. The West Virginia Mine Workers' Union has acted wisely in promptly warning the operators in the Kanawha Valley that their organizing campaign will go on and that the Kanawha miners will strike before they accept the Lewis leadership or the Lewis wage scale.

In conclusion, we may perhaps sum up by quoting the following comment of a rank and file miner on the crucial development in Illinois:

"The Staunton meeting is over, and although I am a pessimist, I admit it was a success."

## WORKERS GATHER AT BRYN MAWR TO STUDY



100 girls from the industries of the country have gathered on the campus of Bryn Mawr college, for the Bryn Mawr Summer School. Here is shown one class, having a wonderful time.



# Pocketbook Workers' Fight— Settled or Unsettled?

By A Pocketbook Worker

**C**OOPER Union's auditorium was filled to capacity. The aisles were jammed with workers. Hundreds were unable to enter, crowding the hall ways. Many left because there was no room for them. About 3,000 members of the International Pocketbook Workers' Union were meeting, in this crowded fashion, to hear the report of their officers on the "settlement" made with the manufacturers and to vote on its acceptance or rejection.

The day, June 10, was incredibly hot, especially at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, when the meeting began. Despite this, the workers stayed for more than five hours while Manager Wolff reported on the settlement made to them. The discussion was so heated and the opposition so intense that a vote by show of hands was clearly an impossible way to settle such a vital question. Nevertheless, such a method of voting was used. Although it was certain that at least 2,000 members had voted, the tellers appointed by the administration announced, after some hesitation, that the agreement had been accepted by 745 against 701.

From the administration's viewpoint, such a close result under the circumstances—even if there had been a fair count—was most embarrassing. To admit that such an important matter as an agreement with the employers was adopted by so small a margin was a reflection on the agreement and showed that it did not have support of the membership. To cover its confusion, the administration announced hastily that 350 votes from a local in New Jersey had been cast for the agreement, with only one against. This was the first time that the New Jersey local had voted upon an agreement with the employers. The announcement of this surprise vote from across the Hudson only added to the confusion and widened the suspicion among the membership.

Upon the secretary's announcement of the vote the workers were astonished to hear the "result." Tumult arose, with shouts of "Further Division!" But the officials immediately adjourned the meeting and walked out.

This Cooper Union meeting closed

a strike which had been called on May 28, after great hesitation on the part of the officers of the union. From the beginning it was apparent that there was no drive or enthusiasm in the union administration for any struggle. Although the workers in the union shops had gone out 100 per cent, there was no effort to create mass action which would bring out the workers in the non-union shops. Mass picketing remained a slogan, there being no organized effort to get the workers out on the picket line in large numbers and to have them advance on the non-union shops in such a way as to impress the workers in those shops and to cause them to rally to the strike. The leadership's energies were absorbed in maneuvering behind the scenes to bring the strike to the quickest possible close without a struggle.

## Why All This Haste?

Why all this haste? The membership feels that no satisfactory answer has been given. What the officials did say was that they feared that more shops would move out of town, if there was not a speedy acceptance of the settlement and that some manufacturers had threatened to do this. And yet, one of the manufacturers moved out of the city as soon as he learned that the agreement had been made.

The union officials knew that there would be a crisis when the old agreement expired on the first of May. Conferences were called prior to the expiration of the agreement. The chief demands made by the union at that time were: the 40-hour week, to reduce the number of unemployed in the trade; unemployment insurance paid by the bosses; and an increase in the minimum scale of wages. At the first conference the employers immediately countered with demands of their own which included: 25 per cent reduction in wages; 20 per cent reorganization during the year; and a joint employment bureau. They made it clear to the union officials that only on the basis of these employer's

demands would they go into conference. It should be stated that this was the first time in the history of the union that the employers had dared to raise the question of reorganization. Nor had they ever insisted so drastically on such a basis for negotiations. Realizing the weakness of the present administration the manufacturers took full advantage.

The demand for reorganization struck at the very life of the union itself. It meant that a certain number of union workers could be arbitrarily discharged by the bosses at the end of each season—in this case, as high as 20 per cent could be sacrificed. Common sense and experience show that the active union workers are the ones most generally penalized in this reorganization scheme. There can be no compromise with reorganization on the part of a progressive union. It spreads fear in the ranks of the workers and paralyzes them from making demands upon the bosses in the future.

After several conferences with the employers, the union officials called meetings of the membership, at which it was reported that "the joint council rejects the demands of the employers". The members greeted this announcement with enthusiasm and proclaimed their approval of this policy. The chairman of the union, I. Laderman, stated at one of these meetings that "only after 20 weeks of struggle will we even talk about reorganization". This attitude met with full approval of the membership and at one of the meetings on the eve of the strike the membership voted full confidence in the conference committee, instructing them, however, that under no circumstances were they to negotiate on reorganization.

Going back to the employers with these explicit instruction from the workers, the union officials met with the same resistance from the bosses. They then proposed arbitration on reorganization, through the impartial chairman, Dr. Moskowitz, although they had not consulted the members about this point at all. The bosses even

refused arbitration, thus forcing the strike. Through this maneuvering the fight really became one for arbitration and the employers could see the weakness of the leadership through such vacillating tactics. The conduct of the strike, as we have seen, only confirmed the employers in this knowledge, showing them that the leadership had no heart for a real battle.

This weak policy produced as its logical fruit the agreement which the union officials accepted. But in arriving at the agreement these officials did not rely on themselves or the mass pressure of the workers. They did not even find it necessary to present the agreement to the strike committee for discussion and approval. Instead, they resorted to a middleman, Dr. L. Hendin, who was in a position to utilize his relationship to a prominent member of the manufacturer's association, and his membership in the Socialist Party. This same Dr. Hendin now emerges as the administrator of the unemployment insurance fund, at a high salary.

On a number of points the agreement itself granted to the employers more than they demanded at the beginning of negotiations. The addition of a second helper for each mechanic is one of these concessions which will

undermine the conditions of the workers. A second gift to the manufacturers is the board of standards created by the agreement which will undoubtedly bring additional advantages to the manufacturers in the form of increased production and wage cuts at the expense of the workers. The unemployment insurance scheme, which is acclaimed by the officials as *the* great achievement in the agreement, will bring very little benefit to the workers. On the basis of a very conservative estimate it is figured that each unemployed worker will receive a maximum of \$2 per week from which he will be expected to pay union dues and assessments.

The functioning of the employment bureau under the control of the union officials for the past eight years has left much to be desired. Cases of discrimination against active union members are frequent, and favoritism is widespread. With the addition of the manufacturers' influence in the employment bureau, there is no doubt that discrimination will be many times worse than before.

### The 'Independent Progressives'

"Clean unionism" and "democracy in the union" were the slogans of the Drevnovitz and the Bandkleider groups

when they came into power in 1929. This group was allied with the "Independent Progressive" group led by S. and I. Laderman, David Meyer and Motlin which were elected to the joint council and to various paid official posts in 1930. The conduct of the so-called strike and acceptance of the manufacturers' agreement show that these combined groups are no more effective in protecting the interests of the workers than the old corrupt Wolinsky administration. The attempts now being made to pass the buck to one or the other member of the administration are simply schemes to fool the membership. The entire administration of the union must be held fully responsible for what took place. Since the agreement was signed there are many indications that the manufacturers are taking full advantage of the weakness of the union administration by making further attacks upon the conditions of the workers. The only sound remedy for this situation is a thorough house cleaning in which the entire ruling clique will be removed and will be replaced by a sincere administration representative of the rank and file, an administration that will defend the interests of the membership of the union.

(Continued on page 29)

## Scottsboro and Its Implications

By HENRY LEE MOON

**W**HAT at first appeared to be merely another Alabama lynching, transparently veiled in the sanction of the court, has developed into a case of far-reaching implications to the Negro in America, and has precipitated a crisis in his leadership. Despite humanitarian professions on the part of those organizations vitally concerned with the fate of the eight Negro boys condemned to die by a Scottsboro, Alabama jury on a framed-up charge of rape against two white girls, the case is no longer simply one of saving the lives of the boys. Something larger looms. As important as it is that these boys should regain their freedom, the question of the ideological orientation of the Negro masses which the case has raised is of much vaster significance.

The story of the arrest and conviction of the boys on questionable testimony and the flimsiest kind of evidence is a tragic record of the depths to which so-called justice in America can descend. It is an amazing revela-

tion of the sadistic tendencies of the Bible Belt. It is a sordid picture of the meanness, of the imbecility, of the human degradation which class exploitation through the instrument of the bourbon slogan of white supremacy has foisted upon the South.

Briefly summarized the story unfolds chronologically as follows: Nine unemployed Negro boys ranging in age from 13 to 20 were taken from a freight train and arrested by a posse of deputies at Paint Rock, Alabama on March 25. On testimony of two white women, who, masquerading as men were taken from the same train and whose characters were revealed to be questionable, the boys were indicted, although they testified that they had not known of the presence of the women, none of them having been in the car with the girls, nor nearby. The girls made the charge only after having been prompted to do so by the sheriff. April 6 was a carnival day in Scottsboro. Ten thousand people from

the surrounding country crowded the village of some 2,000 inhabitants. On that day the trials of the boys began in an atmosphere charged with race hate and resounding with cries for the blood of the nine. Militiamen were on hand to prevent an orgiastic lynching by the mob. When the trials ended on April 9 eight boys had been sentenced to death in the electric chair. In the case of the ninth the jury came to a mistrial. The court had appointed inadequate counsel for the defense of the boys which inadequacy was augmented by a lawyer retained by relatives and friends of the boys in Chattanooga, the home of four of them. Four others came from Atlanta and the other from Monroe, Ga. Execution was set for July 10. Motion for a new trial was denied on June 3.

Meanwhile the fight which has developed between the International Labor Defense and the League of Struggle for Negro Rights on the one hand and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People on

(Continued from Page 26)

# Flashes from the Labor World

When coal miners really get around to fighting, they can fight. And it begins to look as though they are about ready.

Whether one looks at Pittsburgh, St. Clairsville, West Frankfort, or Wheeling, he sees picket lines this morning made up of the men who struck yesterday, pulling into the fight the men who will be cheering on the picket lines tomorrow. At Harlan one sees a grim struggle with hunger, at Charleston such a struggle about to begin.

\* \* \*

A little coal town in Washington county, Pa., sent a delegation of miners to the county seat, a few weeks ago, to tell the county commissioners they were hungry and that the mine bosses were robbing them. The commissioners expressed their regret, but thought little could be done about it. An investigation, of course, would be made. Nothing happened, and that was that. All was quiet. Then one day 200 miners struck under the leadership of the National Miners Union. A small union leading a small strike. But those miners didn't sit down to starve, they started picket lines to the next camps. The strike spread. There's no use saying how many there are on strike as LABOR AGE is mailed you—there would be thousands more before it was delivered.

The bosses promised small pay increases; they called in the U. M. W. A. and offered the check-off; they used the power of every newspaper in Pittsburgh to swing the miners away from the radical union to the conservative. They announced that the strike was about over. The fool miners wouldn't believe it; they kept on spreading their strike despite the newspapers. Then the bosses used tear gas, clubs, finally guns. Then death. They found they could kill strikers but they couldn't kill the strike.

So the strike spread from one county in Pennsylvania to six counties, to Ohio, to West Virginia, to Illinois. Of course demands were drawn up; but the strike is really against starvation. The miners have been working so few days at so little pay that they cannot live on the amounts they get. They say over and over to reporters that they might as well starve striking as starve working. It is a revolt against conditions and the end is not yet.

\* \* \*

In Harlan County, Kentucky, it is the members of the United Mine Workers of America who are on strike instead of the National Miners Union members. There

about 100 miners are in jail. No one, not even the lawyers defending them, know exactly how many. At least 21 are charged with murder, including officers of the local union. There were 7,000 on strike but some 4,000 have been starved back to work. The miners are saying that they will come out again, "When the International comes in."

The chance that John L. Lewis will come to their aid is pretty slim. So slim in fact that in the whole issue of the Mine Workers Journal, there was only a tiny mention of Harlan and Bell Counties—not a word about the killing of James Chasteen, a miner, by Bill Randolph a professional gunman and killer, who was out on bond for another murder when he killed Chasteen. Not a word about the railroading of these U.M.W.A. strikers on framed charges, with no bond allowed by Judge D. C. Jones, whose brother-in-law hires Bill Randolph to do his killing. Not a word about the starvation wages paid by U. S. Steel, Sam Insull, Commonwealth-Edison, and the other millionaire organizations. Editor Ellis Searles, official of Matty Woll's National Civic Federation, couldn't admit his miners were starving and be "patriotic." So the Mine Workers Journal lets the frameup go on against their own members, unnoticed.

Against this the miners naturally are rebelling. Some other leadership will come that will offer them a fighting program. They are not soft; they have fought it out with the company gunmen and whipped them at their own game. They will make a fine rank-and-file for some fighting organization.

\* \* \*

In the Kanawha field of West Virginia, the miners are also tired of temporizing and are saying to the bosses that it is union recognition, a union contract or strike. Here they are led by the West Virginia Mine Workers Union, under the direction of the men who led them in the armed march of the post-war days. They know the battle will be a tough one because they are always on the verge of hunger. But they have decided that they also would rather starve fighting than starve working.

\* \* \*

On the other main front of the labor battle—textiles—the picket lines still face police, gunmen and scabs. At Allentown the bosses are moving to reopen the mills. Professional scabs have been imported to menace the pickets, and two strikers have been seriously wounded.

The rumor goes the rounds that the workers too are arming, putting no faith in the efficacy of the arrest of 13 gunmen and the escape over the state line of others. Workers of another temperament than the Pennsylvania Dutch might long since have flared into bloody opposition. Instead, the picket lines just grow longer and the determination to stay out, stronger.

In the Philadelphia textile area 2,500 workers have won union conditions, and the rest remain committed to a program of active opposition to wage cutting and management's inefficiency in the industry.

\* \* \*

Pittsburgh taxi drivers don't need weeks of parleys and series after series of strike votes. When conditions get bad, they strike—suddenly and effectively.

Months ago the union's executive committee was empowered to call a strike at any time. They met late at night on June 12. At midnight they adjourned. At 2 A. M. the last union driver had parked his cab, notified by word of mouth that the strike had been called.

The action was taken as a result of months of discrimination against union men on the part of the Parmelee cab monopoly, and the militancy of the drivers equals that shown a year ago when they carried on a successful strike against the same company.

\* \* \*

Ideas differ as to the best way of meeting the unemployment situation. Thomas Glynn, Canadian war veteran, left checks totaling \$300 in the San Francisco public library, with directions that the money be divided between Tom Mooney and Nicola Sacco's daughter, and disappeared, apparently a suicide.

Frank Szabo was evicted from his rooming house. He killed his landlord and ran. Failing later to kill the cops who had him cornered, he shot himself.

The lure of the movies brought 17,541 extras to register at the Central Casting Corporation of Hollywood during 1930, of which 833 averaged one day's work a week or more. Not one could boast of steady work. How they lived is not recorded in the archives of the Central Casting Corporation.

About 200 workers are applying to Amtorg Trading Corporation every day, asking for jobs in Soviet Russia; 14,000 will get jobs this year.

FRANK L. PALMER



# In Other Lands

## SPAIN

From an effete, easy going monarchy, stilted and reactionary politically and industrially, but most liberal in its every day social life, Spain has jumped into the whirlpool of European life dividing publicity honors with the British and Russians. Its revolution is not the rose-water affair the journalists of Paris and London thought it would be a month ago.

The Spanish upset began simple enough in a series of municipal elections with the political transition made easy and gradual by the King's voluntary exile. But the old feudal class ran true to form. Operating through the church dignitaries the members of the old order struck back at the Republicans in the shape of pastoral letters and public statements issued from clerical palaces and from pulpits and altars. Encouragement was given the old order by the refusal of the Vatican to receive the Republican Ambassador because he was not a Catholic, but a mild-mannered intellectual agnostic. The leading cardinal went to Rome and returned full of fight; the mild and easy going cabinet awoke from its dreams and ordered the divine expelled. Gradually the revolution took shape along classic lines, and now it is in full blast heading for something like the picture given the world by the French in their great struggles with feudalists and monarchists.

Churches are being attacked and burned on the slightest provocation. Catholic schools and convents are mobbed and closed. Titles are abolished and landlords are threatened with confiscation of their vast estates. Great foreign industrialists are compelled to ease up on the ruthless exploitation of the workers in the Northern provinces. The ex-King's property and the property of the royal family are being investigated, and excellent campaign material is being made of the surveys. A Republican victory is assured and the constitutional convention will be overwhelmingly anti-monarchist. There is a strong trend to the Left and the conservative leaders in the Republican ranks are being slowly forced from the middle ground they assumed in the beginning of the change.

Although the peseta was hammered down in the local and foreign exchanges and the members of the old order are slipping out with money and capital, the Madrid government is not seriously bothered. The French government has gone to the rescue of its sister republic

with a good-sized loan. As France has more money than any other country except the U. S. A., Spain does not have to worry on the score of finances. The greatest menace to Spain is the strong decentralization movements in the North and East. Catalonia, the richest province, is determined to have autonomy with scarcely any string to it. Other provinces will do likewise if she succeeds. Some have already made moves but have not gone as far as Catalonia.

Should decentralization succeed the central government would be weak and almost powerless for a generation. The reactionary elements and the church Tories would also profit. So far it looks as if the cabinet will win everywhere, but will be pushed further towards the extreme Jacobin quarter. The Syndicalists and Communists, while not putting up candidates in a serious way, are hammering away behind the lines and are active in manifestations and mob work.

## BRITAIN

Although several by-elections proved the Labor Party was losing ground and votes, on the whole, it has held itself intact. This is due to the abnormal decline of the Liberals whose voters seem to be going over to the Tories. Lloyd George continues to support MacDonald, and the fuss about Snowden's Land legislation for taxation purposes has subsided. As it will take two years before the tax-levies can be made on the land one does not see what could be gained by voting out the government. The Liberals do not want an election and Lloyd George is not sure of his leadership. If he were sure of his party gaining a few seats, or even holding its own, he would gladly assist the Tories in beating the government. Sometimes one thinks that Baldwin is pleased to be in the opposition. Certainly the ruling class appear contented with the way MacDonald is running the government machine.

Mosely's revolt is not gaining ground. It is failing because it is individualistic and personal instead of reflecting economic factors or trends. It also suffers from lack of a good paper. His management of the campaign against the conservative MacDonald has not been tactful, and dissension has broken out in his ranks. That is ever the way with personality revolts. Had Mosely the support of the I.L.P. he would have done wonders. But Maxton vetoed any support from his group by his devastating analysis of the Mosely platform. The rebel

aristocrat has, however, not wrought in vain, for he has made the Labor Party and the Trade Union Congress executive committee act on the many wage cuts. He has also drawn many brilliant young men and women from the Tory ranks, much to the chagrin of Stanley Baldwin, the ex-premier, who hopes to succeed MacDonald.

Of interest to American radicals was the Pope's pronunciamento on Socialists in which he said "no Catholic can be a true Socialist." MacDonald dodged the issue when it was put to him. He said he would wait for some one in authority in Britain to speak first. A young Jesuit came to the rescue by saying the Pope did not mean the Labor Party men. He explained that all depended on the words "true Socialist." The Jesuit said he was sure the Labor Party men were not in the continental sense "true Socialists." Later Cardinal Bourne said the Pope's statement did not apply to the English at all. The Tories, however, manage to make useful propaganda out of the Roman Pontiff's declaration. As the Catholic and Irish elements are important factors in the Clyde, in North England centers, in London, and in the middle and western counties a bad scare was given the Labor Party leaders. The Catholic leaders, however, saw "red," that is to say, a possible anti-clerical movement that would do the church no good, so they hastened to veto the Pope's message in England. If MacDonald were only half as successful in extricating himself from industrial and financial troubles as he is in wriggling out of political snares and traps all would have been well.

Not one single trade or industry can report a raise in wages while every important industry, coal, iron, steel, textiles, shipping, railways and shipbuilding, to name a few, have had one wage cut after another. Rationalization has stabilized the big business man's end of things but has crucified the union man's side by forcing the workers to produce more of Britain's wealth while compelling them to live on lower wages and lower standards. No wonder Reginald McKenna, England's ablest and most energetic financier, was able to say in his review of the business situation that England had recovered her old stride, that she was exporting more manufactured goods than the U. S. with its 120 million, more than double the population of Britain.

PATRICK L. QUINLAN.

## SCOTTSBORO AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

(Continued from Page 23)

the other in their efforts to save the lives of the boys seems to indicate that the Negro race in America may be entering into a new phase of struggle, one of wide implications not only for the race but for the American labor movement.

There is dispute as to which organization first sought to defend the boys. It is known, however, that the I.L.D. was the first to announce its campaign of defense. Immediately it began making mass appeals among workers of all races to join in the crusade to efface the Scottsboro crime. Telegrams and letters from all sections of the country and cables from abroad, inspired by the I.L.D., were showered upon law enforcement officers of Alabama including the governor and the trial judge. Parades and demonstrations were organized in many cities of this country, and are also reported from other countries. Distinguished counsel was employed. The United Front Scottsboro Defense Committee urging all groups interested in the defense of the boys to join was organized. To date the N.A.A.C.P. has not accepted this invitation.

Hitherto the N.A.A.C.P. has enjoyed a monopoly on all such cases. The American Civil Liberties Union and similar organizations have been willing to cede this jurisdiction in all cases involving Negroes. And in the handling of these cases the N.A.A.C.P. has a creditable record. But now the association is being challenged on its own ground by the I.L.D. and the L.S.N.R. and it is reacting with the characteristics of a child whose candy is being taken away.

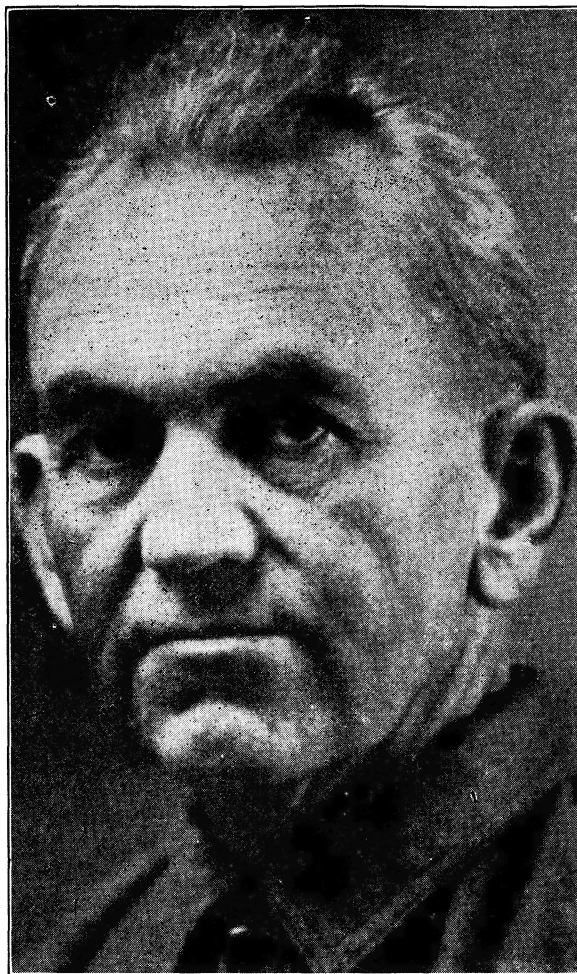
Aroused by the activities of the I.L.D., the N.A.A.C.P. has entered the case. It has sent investigators to the scene. Has retained lawyers. Has held some meetings and collected some funds for the defense. But most of all this organization has created confusion in the case.

However unquestionable the association may be in its desire to save the boys, its fight now is to save itself and its tactics are all shaped in that direction. Placed on the defensive by the I.L.D., its major concern now is whether or not it is to retain its monopoly on cases involving racial conflict. These cases have been the *raison d'être* of the organization during its twenty-one years of existence. Formerly it had been practically uncontested in this field. If this field is to

### JULY 4th and TOM MOONEY

On the Birthday  
of "Our Freedom  
and Democracy"  
Tom Mooney  
Lies in San  
Quentin—His  
Only Crime That  
He Agitated Too  
Well Against the  
Public Utility  
Racketeers.

Shall They Succeed  
in Keeping Him  
There?



be invaded and captured by others, what then becomes of the association? Where will it get its following? How will it raise funds? Even white philanthropy is reluctant to contribute to leadership without followers.

Embittered by the character of the fight the leaders of the N.A.A.C.P. have denounced the I.L.D. and its tactics. Grown suddenly modest with its coming of age the N.A.A.C.P. accuses the I.L.D. of basely using the case in a publicity campaign for propaganda work among the Negro masses. Yet in so recent a report as that of 1930 the association devotes more than three pages to recording the achievements of its own publicity department. It bewails the fact that I.L.D. supporters have sent "threatening" telegrams to the governor of Alabama. It is scarcely more than a year ago that Senator Fess of Ohio publicly complained of the "threatening" character of messages received from N.A.A.C.P. supporters in their fight against the confirmation of Judge Parker as a Supreme Court Justice.

Parades and demonstrations simi-

larly are sneered at. Time was when the N.A.A.C.P. marched down Fifth Avenue behind muffled drums in silent protest against race exploitation, when it called for pickets to fight the showing of "The Birth of a Nation," when it appealed directly to the masses for support. Now that it has attained respectability and has edged in on the trough of white philanthropy these tactics have been abandoned and scorned.

The conflict between the I.L.D. and the N.A.A.C.P. is but the outer manifestations of a deep inner turmoil within the race. Is the Negro race in America to continue to accept the reformist philosophy of the association as its most advanced and militant expression? Or is it to envision its cause as an integral part of that proletarian movement which is striving for fundamental changes in the social order? Is militancy among Negroes to mean reformism for the benefits of certain strata of the race or is it to mean revolution for the benefit of all workers? This is the basic problem which today confronts the Negro masses.



## "Say It With Books"



### KAUTSKY AT THE CROSSROADS

**Bolshevism at a Deadlock**, by Karl Kautsky, Rand School Press, New York, N. Y. \$1.75.

**K**ARL KAUTSKY, the theoretical leader of the international Socialist movement, offers to "the Labor parties of all countries, united in the Labor and Socialist International," a proposed solution for what he considers the most important problem of the moment, in his latest book, "Bolshevism at a Deadlock." The reactionary and counter-revolutionary ideas embodied in his "Terrorism and Communism" are again brought to life in this new plea for "a democratic, Parliamentary Republic." The book can be considered as nothing else than a dangerous and insidious attack upon the Soviet Union, coming as it does in a most critical period for the Soviet Union and due to its veiled form which hides behind Marxian and revolutionary phraseology.

Kautsky utilizes to the full the advantages which are offered to him by the practices and policies now being followed by the Stalin leadership. The impermissible methods of dealing with the peasantry, the negation of the ideas of Lenin, in emasculating the functions of the trade unions, the works committees and the Soviet organs, the elimination of every semblance of honest criticism and the substitution of a shameful regime of internal terror, wherein only the parrot-like utterances of the official bureaucracy is tolerated; all these are now seized upon as typical and characteristic of the Soviet system in order to provide the basis for the revival of Kautsky's worn out thesis. The economic difficulties of industrial production and agriculture arising partly as a result of the present world economic crisis and to a large extent from the factional manipulations and utter incompetence of the Stalin leadership, furnish a golden opportunity for Kautsky to say, "I told you so." It is sufficient to show the insidious character of Kautsky's approach, when we compare his consistent antagonism to the Russian Revolution from its very inception, with the deceptive

question he puts to his readers, "Which side must we take if we want to ward off the counter-revolution and save the threatened revolution in Russia?"

Kautsky's fundamental break with Lenin came during the last World War, when the former supported war credits "under conditions." It was followed by Kautsky's continued assaults upon Lenin, during the Revolution of 1917. According to Kautsky, "This dazzling turn of fortune went to his (Lenin's) head and made him reverse his former theoretical convictions." During that critical period of imperialist slaughter and proletarian revolt, Kautsky showed himself as Lenin declared, "A contemptible sycophant in the service of the bourgeoisie."

Once again the world is in a crisis of the most unrivalled magnitude. The spirit of revolt is beginning once again to agitate the ranks of the working class. The spokesmen of capitalism, like Chadbourne, Butler, Salter, and Fosdick, see capitalism facing a challenge for the right to exist as an economic system, see communism as its world competitor. The foremost capitalist authorities meet in one solemn conclave after another, and yet they have no solution to offer for the present crisis, save renewed threats of war among the various capitalist nations of the earth, and particularly against the Soviet Union. Once again Kautsky is at the crossroads. Yet his book does not touch upon these problems at all, but centers its fire upon the Soviet Union, in a veiled and therefore more dangerous form.

Kautsky pleads for a "programme which can be accepted by all parties of democracy and Socialism in Russia." "The workers and peasants," he says, "will, at least at first (under the democratic republic which Kautsky proposes) have to deal with a weak capitalist class and not with big landlords—with intellectuals who will almost all sympathize with the party of the working class. Nothing is more false than the view that the prestige of the proletariat in Russia, and with it that of the whole world, must sink if it loses its privileged position in that State."

Could the agents of capitalism put their plea in a more innocuous and apparently harmless form? "Just let me get the tip of my foot in, just the slightest bit," says Mr. Capitalist, or rather Karl Kautsky for him. Should the Russian worker be so foolish and stupid as to accept Kautsky's advice, where and how far would that capitalist foot extend? Does he think that the Russian workers are not aware that that foot, even the tip of it, is connected by countless nerve fibres with the most powerful capitalist forces from whom would come unlimited assistance and support, with the international bankers and oil barons, with the Deterdings and Rockefellers, with American and British imperialists who are looking with a hungry eye upon the vast resources of the Soviet Union? Would these robber barons be deterred from their nefarious purpose by the charge that they violated the holy principles of democracy?

It is for the capitalist elements that Kautsky tearfully pleads for "freedom of speech, freedom of meetings, free and secret ballot....universal, equal, direct suffrage." But unfortunately for Kautsky, much water has flowed under the bridges since he first uttered his plea for democracy. Not only the workers of Russia, but the workers in such a haven of democracy as the United States, have been fed up with that capitalist relish. In the United States millions of workers are unemployed and are left to walk the streets in the most abject misery and privation. Yet in America, the home of democracy, these workers are denied even a pittance of unemployment insurance or government relief, such as is given in other countries. Workers demanding even a minimum of relief for themselves and their families are shot down in cold blood in West Virginia, Kentucky, Ohio and Pennsylvania. For Negro workers, lynch law and capitalist democracy in the United States are synonymous. The simplest American worker will understand that if the Russian workers had the common sense and the power to take things into their own hands, it would



be senseless and suicidal for them to let the enemy class insert even a toe.

Precisely in the United States, the land of Mellon, Morrow and Hoover, that rugged individualist, who are so eager and anxious at all times to "make the world safe for democracy" in truly Kautskian style, precisely here is LaFarge's characterization of bourgeois democracy and parliamentarism almost prophetic. LaFarge says, "Parliamentarism is a system of government in which the people acquires the illusion that it is controlling the forces of the country itself, when, in reality, the actual power is concentrated in the hands of the bourgeoisie—and not even of the whole bourgeoisie, but only of certain sections of that class.... In bourgeois society, the more considerable becomes the amount of social wealth, the smaller becomes the number of individuals by whom it is appropriated. The same takes place with power; in proportion as the mass of citizens who possess political rights increases, and the number of elected rulers increases, the actual power is concentrated and becomes the monopoly of a smaller and smaller group of individuals."

James Madison spoke just as plainly to the writers of the American Constitution, when he said, "To secure the public good and private rights against the danger of such a faction (the landless proletariat) and at the same time preserve the spirit and the form of popular government is then the great object to which our inquiries are directed."

It is in this sense that we witness true capitalist democracy at work today in the United States, the type of democracy for whose introduction in the Soviet Union, Kautsky pleads so eloquently. Fortunately we are all too well acquainted with such democracy as expressed by the coal and iron police, injunction judges, yellow dog contracts, lynchings, deportations, suppression of free speech and similar blessings of democratic America, to turn anything but a scornful ear to Kautsky's pleadings.

Kautsky minces no words in pointing out how democracy is to be obtained. He says, "The possibility arises of a victorious peasant revolt against the Bolshevik regime.... as the necessary result of the evil which emanates from the Soviet system itself.... The Russian Revolution which we all must have at heart can only be the Democratic Revolution." What better demagogic slogan could the legions of international imperialism adopt as their own against the Soviet Union than that which Kautsky so generously provides? It is undoubtedly true that the minions of Denikin and Kolchak will be found most ready and willing to fight for Kautsky's "Democratic Revolution" in Russia.

"This would be the beginning of the suppression of Fascism by democracy," says Kautsky. Anyone with a grain of understanding of the forces of history, those who have watched the introduction of Horthy's democracy in Hungary, will understand that the revolution which Kautsky visualizes will turn the Soviet Union into a vale of blood and tears for the masses of the people, under the cruelest and most murderous Fascist regime that the modern world has seen.

In spite of Kautsky's chatter, we are confident that the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union will remain true to the principles laid down by Engels, when he said, "It is perfectly absurd to talk about a free popular State; so long as the proletariat still needs the State, it needs it not in the interests of freedom, but in order to suppress its opponents."

It is true that the present leadership of the Russian Communist Party has by the adoption of the so-called theory of Stalinism, by the adoption of impermissible and dangerous policies, revising the principles of Lenin both as far as economics and internal relations are concerned, by endangering the vital alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry, set aside the fundamental principles upon which the Soviet dictatorship was founded. But we have sufficient confidence in the virility and stamina of the Russian workers and peasants to await with assurance the day when this corrupt, incompetent and un-Communist clique will be destroyed and the proletarian dictatorship will be reestablished in the sense in which Lenin conceived it, and carried it forward.

"Proletarian democracy," said Lenin, "of which the Soviet regime constitutes one of the forms, has given to the world a hitherto unknown expansion and development of democracy for the gigantic majority of the population, for the exploited and laboring masses."

With the support of the masses of the Russian workers and peasants, with the cooperation of the world proletariat, the Soviet Union will solve her present economic difficulties, for as Lenin pointed out, "The Soviets are the direct organization of the laboring and exploited masses themselves, which enables them to organize and administer the State by their own efforts in their own manner."

On this basis the workers of the world will discard with contempt Kautsky's pleas for bourgeois democracy, of which they have had their fill, and will turn with renewed vigor and enthusiasm for inspiration in their struggle against the scourges of capitalism, unemployment and imperialist war, to the Soviet Union, the home of proletarian democracy, the democracy of, by and for the poor, as

against the democracy of privilege,—exploitation and poverty.

BERT MILLER.

## "PUBLIC BE DAMNED" ERA

The Quest for Social Justice. Harold U. Faulkner. Macmillan. 1931. \$4.

THE title of this book is rather misleading, because, although the author does deal with social reforms, he is limited to the period between 1898 and 1914 by the fact that this volume is one of the "History of American Life" series edited by Arthur M. Schlesinger and Dixon Ryan Fox. That period during which the nation, appalled at the results of the unbridled individualism of the "public be damned" era which had concentrated the colossal economic power of America into a few capitalist hands, attempted through legislative and social reforms to curb this power, until the World War turned everything topsy turvy, is characterized as "the quest for social justice."

Faulkner describes the rise of the labor movement, the municipal reforms of the muck raking era, the coming of government regulation in business and transportation, the feminist movement, the fight for child labor legislation, the position of religion and science in the period, and our first attempts at imperialism in the interests of our weaker Latin-American brothers. The book is interestingly and succinctly written and liberally documented.

Fortunately for the title of his book, but unfortunately for the reader-in-search of truth, his consideration of social reforms stops abruptly with 1914. Viewing the happenings since the war—the Teapot Dome scandals, the gang wars, the reappearance of sweatshops and child labor, the business unionism of the A. F. of L., the "tired radicals" on their chicken farms, the universality of unemployment and hunger, the power of the corporations in public utilities, it appears that the "quest for social justice" is not yet finished.

HELEN G. NORTON

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## REBELLION FLAMES THRU COAL FIELDS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

(Continued from Page 13)

wage scale as obtained before the strike. Vice-President Murray announced that the International constitution would be suspended for 48 hours to permit members at the seven mines of the company covered by the agreement to adhere to the United Mine Workers without initiation fees. National Miners Union officers denounced the agreement, as they had when Governor Pinchot first sponsored a conference.

Denying that the United Mine Workers Union had the support of the miners, the left wing union announced that they would picket the mines when they attempted to open under the agreement. As if to show miners the alternative to accepting the concession of organization in the United Mine Workers, to the south end of the coal mine war front in Fayette county, deputies, herding scabs, opened fire with revolvers on pickets fleeing from a discharge of tear gas at Arnold City. Four were wounded, the two seriously injured being James Davis, mild mannered Sunday school superintendent and president of the N.M.U. local, and Gallagher, secretary of the local. Nick Filipovich, store keeper miner sympathizer and head of relief work, was killed as he stood beside his wife on the front porch of his store near by. Sheriff Aubrey of Fayette county arrived on the scene and placed the six

deputies and two Coal and Iron Police under arrest. When questioned by newspapermen, the sheriff explained that the deputies were not "his men" but belonged to the Pittsburgh Coal company. He had merely deputized them.

## THE C. P. L. A. POLICY IN UNIONS

(Continued from Page 10)

toward the eventual establishment of an effective silk workers' organization as an autonomous department of the United Textile Workers; among the miners in Illinois, Kansas, West Virginia, Ohio and elsewhere, C.P.L.A. has given inspiration and help to the movement to clean out Lewisism from the remnants of the miners' union and to build again a powerful, inclusive, and militant union in that basic industry.

In this country, the very citadel of capitalism and imperialism, the elementary task of organizing the masses of the workers into honest and fighting industrial unions has still to be done. If that job is not done, labor in any serious crisis which may overtake this country will find itself pitifully weak and unprepared. If the job is to be done, a united front of all honest elements on the basis of a militant and realistic policy will be needed. That is what the C.P.L.A. stands for on the economic field. No amount of revolutionary talk will get us anywhere unless we have that.

## POCKETBOOK WORKERS' FIGHT—SETTLED OR UNSETTLED?

(Continued from Page 23)

The workers must also be on guard against the old Shiplacoff administration which is again raising its head ready to capitalize the dissatisfaction of the workers with the present administration. Under no circumstances must the members of the union forget the Shiplacoff agreement of 1929. At that time conditions were most favorable for winning better conditions for the workers, for instance a 40-hour week, and other points. Yet, the Shiplacoff administration backed down completely and the workers gained nothing.

An analysis of the present situation confronting the pocketbook makers would not be complete without one further note of serious warning. Due to the discontent of the members a rank and file movement has been organized. In order that this movement may go forward and achieve success, it must be on guard against the slightest attempt to utilize it for creating a dual union, which at this time would create chaos in the industry and demoralization for the workers.

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